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THE WEAVER AT HIS LOOM.

In the dark high-raftered room
Sits the weaver at his loom;
Now to right, and now to left
Speeds the shuttle through the weft.
Like a bird across the sky
Back and forth he makes it fly.
Or like mouse when all are sleeping
See it through the threads come creep-
ing.

Then, as though affrighted, dive,
Till you think it thing alive!

Music here the weaver makes,
When the great loom throbs and
shakes,

When his hand and foot shall beat
Quick-step march for soldiers' feet;
Or a song for shepherd lads,
While he weaves their chequered
plaids.

Till the loom with one voice speaking
Sets each beam and rafter creaking,
Till the song of warp and woof
Rises rocking to the roof.

Swifter till the web be done,
Singing all the way you run,
Fly shuttle, faster fly,
Weave the ragged fleeces!

Marna Pease.

A PRAYER.

Now wilt me take for Jesus' sake,
Nor cast me out at all;
I shall not fear the foe awake,
Saved by Thy City wall;
But in the night with no affright
Shall hear him steal without,
Who may not scale Thy wall of might,
Thy Bastion, nor redoubt.

Full well I know that to the foe
Wilt yield me not for aye,
Unless mine own hand should undo
The gates that are my stay;
My folly and pride should open wide
Thy doors and set me free
'Mid tigers striped and panthers pled
Far from Thy liberty.

Unless by debt myself I set
Outside Thy loving ken,
And yield myself by weight of debt
Unto my fellow-men.

Deal with my guilt Thou as Thou wilt,
And "hold" I shall not cry,
So I be Thine in storm and shine,
Thine only till I die.

Katharine Tynan.

A GENERAL COMMUNION.

I saw the throng, so deeply separate,
Fed at one only board—
The devout people, moved, intent, elate,
And the devoted Lord.

Oh struck apart! not side from human
side,
But soul from human soul,
As each asunder absorbed the Multi-
plied,
The ever-unparted whole.

I saw this people as a field of flowers,
Each grown at such a price,
The sum of unimaginable powers
Did no more than suffice.

A thousand single central daisies they,
A thousand of the one;
For each, the entire monopoly of day,
For each, the whole of the devoted
sun.

Alice Meynell.

The Dublin Review.

FOREST SONG.

All around I heard the whispering
larches
Swinging to the low-lipped wind;
God, they piped, is lilting in our arches,
For He loveth leafen kind.

Ferns I heard, unfolding from their
slumber,
Say confiding to the reed:
God well knoweth us, Who loves to
number
Us and all our fairy seed.

Voices hummed as of a multitude
Crowding from their lowly sod;
'Twas the stricken daisies where I
stood,
Crying to the daisies' God.

Shane Leslie.

CHINA — A REPUBLIC?

Although many people are now wise after the event, the truth about the Chinese revolution is that it has surprised even the best-informed, and probably the reformers themselves. The approaching doom of the Manchus has been foreseen for some time, and the growth of a national spirit, which was also anti-dynastic, was evident to everyone, but the how, when, and where of the outbreak was a matter on which few would have hazarded their reputation as prophets. From the first it appeared certain that the movement was different from any previous revolution, because it had enlisted the literary and law-abiding classes, and, whatever may be the outcome of the struggle between Imperialists and Reformers, there is no doubt on one point—China cannot go back to the old *régime*. Before trying to pierce the future with a forecast of what her choice may be, it is necessary to understand clearly the form of government under which she has been living. With all its imperfections that form has survived for three hundred years; in essentials, indeed, much longer, for the Manchu dynasty did not alter the political structure, save to superimpose themselves upon it as a kind of decorative façade. It is certain, among much that is doubtful and chaotic, that there is something in the political system to which the Chinese have so long been accustomed which fits in with their character and domestic habits. The standard authority on Chinese government, Mayers, goes so far as to say:—

An appreciation of the condition of affairs may possibly tend to correct the too sanguine views which have been entertained of a speedy entrance of the Chinese, as a Government and people, upon the path of European progress. In order that such a result should be accomplished, to any tangible ex-

tent, it would be necessary that the most cherished principles of the national religion should be abandoned, the idols of literary worship dethroned, and the recognized fountain of all honor deserted in favor of pursuits and doctrines which are now contemptuously ignored. A change such as this may, and perhaps will, be produced under the pressure of imperious necessity, if not as the consequence of revolution. But it would be a delusion to anticipate it as brought about by voluntary development.

Written in the 'seventies, this carefully-formed judgment has so far been justified. Three lines of consideration are suggested by it. What are the main characteristics of that social and political system which Mayers believed to have its roots deep in the soil of China? What is the pressure now applied which might be considered to form an "imperious necessity" for change? What are the essentials for success if the government of the future is to combine due consideration for tradition and national idiosyncrasy with requisite allowance for modern conditions and the ambitions of her progressive element?

In one respect modern conditions in themselves have already succeeded in profoundly modifying the methods of Chinese traditional government. China has been, not inaptly, described as a democracy living under a theocracy. The Chinese appear, from a period antedating the dawn of reliable history, to have possessed in a peculiar degree the instinct of self-government. The elaborate edifice of society, resting on the family, constitutes a national organization in itself, and possesses immense authority. This has, of course, been true, in a sense, of every country; and at the present time in the most complicated political system, such as that of the United States, the town

meeting (an enlargement of the family council) is the foundation of the political edifice. But the Chinese family is a far less elastic unit than that of any Occidental race. As the family is the unit of the Chinese nation, so is the *hsien*, or district, the unit of the whole administrative system. Every Chinese belongs to a *hsien*, which in itself is a civic, political, judicial, and fiscal unit. In this *hsien* is his home, his family altar, and to it he will return, however far he may range, if not alive, then after death, for his bones must rest there. The strength and permanence of this family tie must be a vital fact in China's political evolution. The system of government begins with the *chih-hsien*, or magistrate, who fulfils in his person the duties of police magistrate, coroner, sheriff, jail-warden, tax-collector, attorney, public prosecutor, and "lord high everything else." In practice he is not called on to perform too large a proportion of exacting duties, for not only are the Chinese law-abiding, but they have an unofficial machinery in their elders and headmen (who are nominated by the magistrate with the concurrence of the villagers), by whom a vast amount of business, which in other countries would come before higher officials, is settled in accordance with immemorial customs. The latter vary from place to place, constituting the most bewildering maze of native law in existence, but they are perfectly understood by the people themselves, which is more than can be said of other codes in more enlightened countries. The important fact to remember is that the family—which in China, be it remembered, includes the dead as well as the living—is the germ-cell of society, and that theories of individualism will gain but slowly in such a soil.

A second interesting point about Chinese development is the power of

combination which is so marked a feature of their commercial life. Commercial questions are settled by the guilds which exist everywhere. Long before the advent of an Imperial postage the merchants had a highly-developed system, not only of letter exchange, but for sending money. The native postage *hongs*, which are flourishing concerns, continue to compete successfully even with an Imperial postal system, which is run at a loss. Despite a currency muddle, which is the despair of foreigners, the Chinese have carried on banking operations for hundreds of years. Everyone is familiar with facts as to the size and strength of China's secret societies—another proof of a power of cohesion and self-government among her people. Altogether, we have every reason to suppose that the Chinese people have not sunk into their present state of political inefficiency for the lack of cohesion in their society. Indeed, it is probable that, considering especially its extent of area and density of population, China has been extraordinarily well and peaceably governed in the past. The family and village system, briefly outlined, which is applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to towns or parts of towns, has provided the machinery for keeping law and order at the minimum of cost and with the maximum of consideration for the people themselves, for they interpret the law and put it in force in their own persons. Each village, each town, each province, is entirely self-contained and autonomous.

On the top of this great Chinese social edifice is superimposed the Imperial Government. The original idea, which was paramount when Mayers wrote, was that the Imperial officials should not assume initiative in the conduct of affairs; should, in fact, not so much govern as register, check, and inspect the work done by the provincial authorities, who, however, could only

be removed, degraded, or promoted by the Central Government. The *chih-sien*, who is the lowest rung in the official ladder, oversees the village elders; he, in his turn, is overlooked by the *chih-fu*, or prefect, under whom there are several districts; and a group of departments forms a circuit presided over by the *tao-tai*. The next grade higher is that of the *fu-tai*, or Governor of a province, and within this province, as has been said, there is complete autonomy. Its only duty towards the Imperial Government is punctually to make the contribution at which it is assessed. The duties of the *fu-tai* have been summed up as "remit the tribute and keep the peace." Some provinces are grouped together under a Governor-General, miscalled by Europeans Viceroy, but the real chain of authority is completed when the ranks between district magistrate and provincial governor are bridged. Above the latter there is only the Son of Heaven himself.

This brief outline of the system would not be complete without some description of the Manchu rulers, who for nearly three hundred years have imposed themselves on the Chinese. It is well known that they did this by military ascendancy. The Chinese were essentially peaceful, and again and again their country has been overrun by conquerors. The conquerors usually ended by absorption into Chinese life and civilization. The Manchus determined to avoid this fate, so they prohibited inter-marriage, and formed their small nation into a caste apart, with a clan system to keep them together. Notwithstanding a general impression that they absorbed all patronage worth having, a reliable authority considers that not more than one-fifth of the posts in provincial Governments have been held recently by Manchus, and case after case has occurred of Chinese rising to the very highest

rank in the Government. Nor do the Imperial clansmen (Manchus descended from the founders of the dynasty) form a permanent titled aristocracy. At the thirteenth generation from the ruling House they are merged in the commoners. There are only eight hereditary princes—the "Iron-capped" or "helmeted" princes—and there are a few Chinese families, such as the descendants of Confucius, who enjoy hereditary rank, but no special privileges. Every career in China, every rank and power, has hitherto been open to talent, but could only be reached through the portals of literary examination. The position of the Manchus has never, therefore, approached in despotism that of some monarchies. But, since all the higher appointments were made by the Throne from the lists of successful literary aspirants, who were dependent upon the same source for the distribution of the superior literary degrees, and since promotion depended entirely on "giving satisfaction," a powerful incentive existed for loyalty, and few men exhibited any real independence. It is an invariable rule that no official should ever be appointed in his own native province, and the term of office is only three years, or at the discretion of the Crown. As official salaries are absolutely inadequate, and have to be supplemented by local "squeeze," there is usually little chance of any official becoming too intimately allied with his temporary charge. Too much reprobation, however, need not be expended on the Chinese system of payment. It was a recognized method in Western Europe not so very long ago, and is by no means unknown in Russia to-day. The sum which the taxation of a province is expected to yield is fixed far below the real amount. Reliable estimates of the amount realizable from the land tax, for instance, give between three hundred and sev-

enty-five million and four hundred million taels; the *reported* collection was recently only twenty-six millions, while the actual collection was probably well over one hundred millions. In any case, if there is a huge margin between what is paid into the Imperial treasury and what must have been collected, there is an even greater difference between the tax collected and the taxable capacity of the land as estimated by such observers as Sir Robert Hart and Mr. George Jamieson. It may be shrewdly questioned whether the Chinese landowner will find himself better off, at the first blush, under a more up-to-date system of tax-collection.

Works of public utility have suffered most from these financial methods. Necessary repairs and upkeep have been left undone because there was no "squeeze" to be got on small contracts, while large expenditure has been too hastily sanctioned for the converse reason. But the point I am endeavoring to elucidate is that the *internal* condition of China has not, in the eyes of the great masses of her population, been sufficiently bad to warrant revolutionary methods. Nor is the outcry for governmental reform pointed directly at such abuses as have been described, nor at a system which appears natural and simple to the vast majority of Chinese, nor at any acts of "oppression" on the part of the dynasty. Had the Manchus been able to put forward another ruler of the capacity and energy of the Empress-Dowager, the old *régime* might have gone on indefinitely. And yet, especially in the last thirty years, the position of the Chinese and their ruling House had undergone a momentous change, which was bound to influence the future of both.

This change has been due to the drawing of China into the arena of world politics. It may have been a

true political instinct which warned the Manchus that contact of China with the "outer barbarians" would be fatal to their rule. Foreigners coming into contact with provincial officials appealed over their heads to Peking, and foreign intercourse, in many aspects, made it necessary to establish a body at Peking with special authority to deal with such questions. The *Tsungli Yamen*, or Foreign Office, came into being in 1861, and from being a department chiefly concerned with the judicious shelving of inconvenient questions, it actually became the most important factor in the State. In 1901 it was abolished, but the Grand Council which superseded it (becoming the chief of the "boards" which are supposed to form a hedge of advisers round the Throne) inherited its power and authority. Thus a Cabinet actually came into being, and, although it nominally possessed no executive power, yet, being formed of heads of departments, it exercised very wide authority. The abolition of the Grand Council in favor of a genuine Cabinet, responsible to the newly-formed Parliament, was part of the demand for reform in the beginning of this year, and was acceded to by the Government; but, as a matter of fact, the Chinese declare the new Cabinet to be only the old Council—a round table, instead of a square one, making the chief difference. It is apparent that, whatever may have been the shortcomings of Manchu rulers in the past, they avoided, until the exigencies of foreign intercourse drove them into it, the erection of a chamber which would stand between them and the people. The Chinese accepted the personal rule of a theocratic monarch. They are not prepared to accept the rule of a non-responsible Cabinet. Moreover, the palace politics, dominated by women and eunuchs, which irritated Chinese statesmen under the Empress-Dow-

ager's régime, became intolerable when her strong personality and real gift for government were removed. There is considerable exaggeration in the stories which, from various sources, have been circulated as to the power of eunuchs and other features of palace life, but the fact remains that the *entourage* of the Manchu court is quite unsuited to the development of reform of any kind.

But, if the weakness and corruption of the Manchus at Peking, and the assumption of power by a body nominated and controlled by them, have been factors in the Chinese revolution, it must be admitted that they were only filling up the cup which was already overflowing with the results of the disastrous foreign policy of the last half-century. Intercourse with the rest of the world, and particularly with Japan, has corrected the perspective of the views of educated Chinese. The school of thought which in our own country and the United States preaches the doctrine that, if only contented and inoffensive to the outside world, one will inevitably be able to live in peace, cannot have devoted much attention to the history of European intercourse with the Far East. China, albeit a materialistic nation in many ways, had founded her whole philosophy of life on an ethical or moral basis. She is forced by the logic of events to take a different standpoint.

She has seen the establishment and maintenance of forced extra-territorial rights within her borders; she has had to submit to the loss of slices of territory, even within the eighteen provinces; she has acquiesced perforce in the pre-emption by foreigners of special rights over "spheres of influence"; and she has watched with growing suspicion and anger the economic conquest of large sections of her country through railway and mining concessions and loans. It is perfectly true

that many of the schemes which foreign capital have promoted were to her advantage—notably the railway enterprises—but it is intolerable to patriotic Chinese that there should be lines, not only built and controlled by foreigners within her borders, but actually owned (as is the case with the French line in Yunnan and the German one in Shantung), while she herself is prevented from building railways in what is still, nominally, her own territory of Manchuria.

The result of the Russo-Japanese War has meant to China the entire lopping off of a quondam feudatory State, and the practical loss of her great northern province of Manchuria. Under the treaty of Portsmouth, China retains rights over Manchuria which might be the instruments of recovering that country if she is in a position to enforce them. This settlement will be due in a little more than a decade. There is no time to be lost. To a foreign observer it seems an almost hopeless task that China, internally distracted, should attempt that re-organization which alone will give her the power to claim the withdrawal of Russian and Japanese troops. Yet that patriotic Chinese dream of such a possibility cannot be doubted. This is but one facet of that great question of foreign relations which is the true compelling force in the face of which China must reform or perish. Here we have the "imperious necessity" of which Mayers wrote. Pressure from without is the factor which may make China a nation, equipped as modern nations must be.

We may be permitted to imagine that a great number of thoughtful Chinese, as well as many foreign observers, reached this conclusion some time ago. It is seldom difficult to find out what is wrong—the crux of the question lies in prescribing the right remedy. Writing many times in the last

twenty years on that gradual awakening of China which I was one of the first to diagnose, I have always insisted on the fact that a purification of the administrative service was a first essential. And yet it will be one of the most difficult of all the reformer's tasks. If the rather vague reports which reach us are to be relied on, there is at present a conflict, not so much between Imperialists and reformers, as between reformers of two types—the first, anxious to preserve a dynasty and to set up a constitution, while the second is in favor of a republican form of government. The latest news, as this article goes to press, is the formation of a Cabinet by Yuan Shih-kai who has apparently at last determined to take the monarchical side. But the Cabinet contains names of men who are not likely to hold office, and there are other evidences that it is a "save-face" expedient. The fact that many of the reformers have been educated in the United States, and, during a sojourn in that country, which cannot have been very extended, have probably seen and heard only the favorable aspects of republican government, will undoubtedly color the political conceptions of the New China. The crude ideas of students, who in Japanese universities rubbed off their native virtues and acquired only a veneer of modern thought, was felt to be a danger to the State some years ago, and the number allowed to go to Tokio was limited. This is a good thing, for the kind of European doctrine of the "rights of man" which was acquired at third-hand through Japanese sources was calculated to distort the vision of an Oriental without giving him an Occidental point of view. I have had an opportunity of learning, at first hand, what are the theories of some of the more advanced reformers, and it is only fair to state that they are under

no illusions as to the changes they desire to make. The word "democracy" is not to them a shibboleth. They contemplate a republic as the only means of getting rid of the Manchus, who stand for reaction in Chinese politics, but they intend to set up a strong central authority; and, following the precedent of the Turkish revolution, that authority will, at all events to begin with, be a military one.

A number of missions have been dispatched in recent years to study the governmental systems of the world, and though their terms of reference were probably too wide, and their opportunities of genuine study too narrow for satisfactory results, yet the knowledge of foreign countries thus gained by high officials cannot but have had an effect on the tone of public opinion. With the last sentence is reached a very important feature in China's reform movement. A genuine public opinion has actually begun to make itself felt as the result of the improvement of communications, the growth of the Press, and the widening of the scheme of education. The tone of that opinion is markedly national, and, having in view the facts already alluded to in connection with foreign relations, it is not difficult to see why that public opinion has been distinctly anti-foreign. But is public opinion on the side of a republic? This is a question which no European, however well-informed, and probably very few Chinese, are in a position to answer. After all, the proportion of foreign-trained and educated is a mere drop in the bucket in the four hundred millions of China's estimated population.

A republic such as Sun Yat Sen is said to favor would be a federation of States, on the United States model, though with important differences. The autonomy of the Chinese provinces suggests that the model would be an easy one to follow. Already

the provinces have local parliaments, or assemblies, and a fully-equipped machinery for local self-government. They enjoy, as do the States of the Union, the right to recruit a local militia, and, indeed, the provincial armies of China are probably the most efficient (or the least inefficient) forces in the Empire. They are fiscally independent, save for certain Government monopolies, and, although there are Imperial customs, yet there are also local or "native" customs which supply a portion of the provincial revenue. In short, there are many reasons and circumstances which point to the possibility of China being successfully split up into autonomous States. The real difficulty begins when we try to provide the connecting-link to federate those States into a homogeneous whole.

Where would be the federal capital? Peking is the capital of the Manchus. It is not essentially the capital of a Chinese empire or republic. In the third century there were three kingdoms and three capitals; later on there were the two kingdoms of the North and South, with the Yangtze as the dividing line. Nanking was the capital of the South, which was the Chinese kingdom. It was not till the seventh century that the Sung dynasty reunited the empire; in the twelfth century Kai-feng was the capital, until it fell before Tartar invasions, when the seat of government was moved, first to Nanking and afterwards to Hangchow. The Mongol Emperor Kublai Khan fixed his capital at Peking, and it remained there during the native Ming dynasty, which was replaced in 1644 by the Manchu Tsing dynasty. But the position of the capital has never been satisfactory to the Chinese, and one remembers the advice of Gordon when the Russian advance threatened, "Move your queen bee to Nanking."

The difficulty of fixing a federal capital in the United States and in Aus-

tralia has been met by the erection of a new city. No such way out would be open in overcrowded China; and the rival claims of provinces which contain Canton (second, if not first, in population), or the great cities of the Yangtze, would be extremely hard to settle. This may appear a trivial difficulty, but it is only typical of a factor in the situation which could not be ignored—inter-provincial jealousy. The Chinese are intensely provincial, and the extent of country in the eighteen provinces which they inhabit, though not so great as the United States, is practically continental, while the differences of speech, character, and interests vary far more than in the American Republic.

The root idea of democratic government is that of individual responsibility and liberty. Political power is, theoretically, divided into as many factions as there are citizens, and it is assumed that by this means an automatic check will be provided on the inevitable tendency to combine for the purpose of gathering power into the hands of the few. How far practice is from theory may be judged from the present character of the American Senate, Tammany Hall, and the growing power of the Trusts. It even appears as if we are bound to move, politically, in a circle, from autocracy to autocracy, since there is no evidence anywhere that democracy, as a principle, survives the exigencies of practical administration. The question is how far the theories of republican government would be intelligible to the Chinese masses, how far they are fitted for the exercise of those responsibilities which would be placed upon them. Although democratic in a social sense, China is not democratic in a political one. To descend from first principles to actual facts, it seems likely that any attempt to establish a genuinely democratic system would throw the whole politi-

cal power into the hands, not of individuals, but of groups. The power of these groups, such as the secret societies, the commercial guilds, or the families in certain districts, would be a barrier in the way of a true democratic government. They have been kept in check, hitherto, by the centralized administration, with its many safeguards, and there is a great deal to be said in favor of retaining a strong hold on that administration, especially in view of the extremely difficult reforms that have to be carried out, and the fact that there can be but few Chinese as yet educated sufficiently in modern methods to supervise those reforms. At its best a republican form of government imposes on the individual citizen a responsibility for which the Chinese millions are not ready; at its worst it means government by an oligarchy, as in Mexico. It is doubtful whether a republic on the Mexican or South American model would be an improvement on the present Chinese system, or would be tolerated by a people who already enjoy so large a measure of political freedom. And yet some form of central control must be devised to replace the semi-divine monarch, the Son of Heaven, who has hitherto been the focussing-point in social, religious, and political life.

The question of whether or no a republican form of government could be inaugurated with a sufficiently strong central power to hold the provinces together is very largely a question of personalities. Whether the States of America could ever have been united without the genius of Washington and Hamilton, whether the German Empire is the creation of circumstance or of Bismarck, and how far Italy owes her national unity to Garibaldi or Cavour, are interesting speculations not without bearing on the Chinese situation, but with this difference—China is at present united in one empire under

an ancient system; all these other States had to be brought together. With them it was a case of an abdication of individual power in order to form a federal power. With China it appears that the central power will have to be weakened in order to give strength to the provinces. At least, no other interpretation is possible, unless the government is to be "the old shop under a new signboard," an autocratic form of government under a republican name. Then arises the question: Where is the man who can replace, by virtue of strength, wisdom, and public confidence, the dynasty which has hitherto held its place as a semi-divine institution, the apex of the family life of the nation? European publications have been busily canvassing the claims of one or two men to become "the father of the people." Opinion (in Europe and America) seems to be divided between Sun Yat Sen, a devoted revolutionary propagandist, and Yuan Shih-kai, a clever and able opportunist. But it may be safely said that Yuan, regarded by the Manchus as their only remaining chance, because he once before saved the Empress Dowager at the expense of the Reform movement, is neither a Washington nor a Bismarck. He is not entirely trusted by either party in the State, and although his real ability is recognized, he is not as universally acclaimed in China as in the Western world. The panegyrics poured out on him have not always pleased Chinese readers, who are a little tired of hearing that he is their "one strong man." At the present time he is doing all he can to come down on the right side of the fence. As for Dr. Sun, it is no disparagement to an earnest and self-sacrificing apostle of reform to say that he is neither a Garibaldi nor a Cavour. Whether he is a Mazzini remains to be seen.

There is something to be said for the

plans, as given to me by the reformers, of a military domination to last for a term of years, followed by a transition period, and leading up to full constitutional government. Even at this last stage they propose to retain a check on the democracy; first, by keeping that examination system, to which the Chinese are so well accustomed, and having a standard for voters; and second, by expanding another familiar institution, the Board of Censors, into an Inspectorate, under central control, to check abuses and draw attention to needed reforms. Whether the ardent spirits, who have placed the purification of the administration and the abolition of the *queue*, foot-binding, domestic slavery, and the abuse of opium on the list of reforms to be tackled in their first years of reconstruction, will be strong enough to persist with their policy remains to be seen. Unfortunately for the theory of a strong central military power the germ of it does not, at present, exist, as it did in Turkey, in a unified army under central control. The Chinese armies, apart from the Manchu, Chinese, and Mongol bannermen and the official army (which exists largely on paper), are raised and maintained in the provinces, and it will be difficult to secure unity of action, especially after the first shock of collision is over. There appears to be no military leader of sufficient experience and outstanding reputation to be universally acclaimed. The reformers are securing the services of General Homer Lea, a well-known American writer on military questions, as an adviser, but if it is true that Dr. Sun Yat Sen is to be the first President of

The Fortnightly Review.

the new republic, he, as a civilian, will have some difficulty with the military authorities. At one time Yuan Shih-kai commanded a force which was superior to any other in China, but it is two years since he retired, and it is not clear that his military prestige has survived. If he persists in propping up the dynasty there will probably be a split, northern China remaining monarchical and the centre and south setting up a republic or republics. Such a settlement cannot be permanent, and as it would inevitably open the door for foreign intervention it is to be hoped, in the true interests of China, that it will be avoided at all costs.

No one with any regard for his reputation cares to commit himself to predictions about China, which is a country where the unexpected always happens. But that she is at last awake is abundantly clear, and she will wrestle through her difficulties if she is given a fair chance. The impression gained from a study of her social and political conditions is that, as she already possesses the essentials of democratic liberty, she need not be too much concerned with the actual label attached to her government. At the same time, since foreign relations of an unusually delicate and complex character are the basic causes of the revolution, it would be idle for the reformers to set up any rule which did not include a strong central government, which alone will be capable of placing the army, navy, and finances of China on a modern and efficient basis and of securing for her in the world that position to which her size, wealth, and the character of her people entitle her.

Archibald R. Colquhoun.

THE MOST FAMOUS FIGHTING SHIP IN HISTORY.

More than a century ago—on December 4, 1805, to be exact—a sorely battered, but still stately, battleship came slowly up the Solent and dropped anchor at Spithead. Her rigging was knotted, her sails torn, her topmasts gone; there were dark stains of blood on her decks: her sides were torn and scarred with shot, and, in some cases, the shot was yet showing under the splintered wood. It was the *Victory*, Nelson's flagship, coming into port after Trafalgar. The glory of the greatest naval victory ever won lay upon her; but her flag flew half-mast—a gesture of distress. She had carried that mute symbol of grief ever since the day of battle, for Nelson was dead; and not even victory was a quite adequate compensation for that loss.

And anyone who to-day desires to visit the famous ship as she lies at her moorings in Portsmouth Harbor could hardly do better than take the course she took, with her dead Admiral on board, up the Solent, that historic strip of water with its wooded shores and crowded memories. For there is perhaps no other patch of sea under any sky charged with such associations, or that offers quite the same combination of busy sea-life, old and new. Across the Solent, like antique beads stretched on a thread, is a line of round chequer-patterned forts with quaint names—"The Spit," "The Horse," "No Man's," &c. These ancient forts are useless, but they are still picturesque. The great water-lane is full of sea-life—leaning yachts with their white sails, coasting craft of every size and rig, brown-sailed fishing-boats, with here and there an ocean tramp, its paint bleached by tropical suns and seas. There are fighting ships, too, of all types coming and going; torpedo-boats, low, black, deadly-looking—tiny sea-

gnats, but of amazing stinging power; battleships, with tripod masts; drab-colored cruisers, &c.

The gap into Portsmouth Harbor, when at last it comes into sight, is perilously narrow. How the bluff three-deckers of a century ago, with their round bows, their apple-shaped hulls, and towering piles of canvas, could get through that narrow gap in all weathers—and before tugs were invented—is still a puzzle. The long war with France certainly bred fine seamen.

By this time the visitor catches a glimpse of a great ship, unlike anything the Solent has yet offered to his gaze, lying moored in Portsmouth Harbor. Her tall masts—the jack flying from the mizzen—her triple lines of ports, the stately hull, the high proud stem identify her. This is the *Victory*, the most famous fighting ship in all history! She has lain there since 1812, and is still in commission, for she carries the flag of the Naval Commander-in-Chief. Every year, as October 21 comes round, a wreath of laurel adorns each mast-head. In 1869, indeed, the British Admiralty, suddenly fallen bankrupt of historical imagination, discovered it had no longer any useful office for the ship on which Nelson died; and for twenty-two distressful years—1869-1891—the *Victory* lay neglected, unhonored, forgotten. She might have been broken up for firewood, or sold as old timber. But in 1891 she was restored to her dignity as flagship, and still from her moorings she appeals, as no other ship that floats, or ever floated—save perhaps the *Mayflower*—could appeal, to the English-speaking race.

In her active days the *Victory* bore the reputation of being the fastest battleship ever built; and as she lies to-day in the quiet Portsmouth waters

her lines still whisper of speed. The typical British three-decker of the Revolutionary Wars resembled—except in the matter of angles—a brick on edge. She was high, stumpy, short-bodied, square-sterned. Her bows were modelled on the contours of a pumpkin. She was as unsinkable, perhaps, as a corked bottle, and about as weatherly. But the lines of the *Victory* wear a certain aspect of grace. Her proportions are harmonious. Her hull rounds out for a little distance above the water-line and then tumbles home to the upper deck; and this made her a steady ship. Her stem is high, haughty, menacing; and, as she bore down, with leaning decks, upon some hostile line of battle, with her sky-climbing piles of white canvas above and her three curving lines of guns below, she must have worn a very formidable aspect.

The *Victory* has a long and honorable ancestry. A ship carrying her name has been on the British Navy List ever since 1570, and if any one could tell, in adequate prose, the tale stretching through three centuries, of that line of hard-fighting, storm-beaten ships, the story would make surprisingly good reading. The immediate predecessor of Nelson's *Victory* carried 110 guns, and was counted the finest ship in the service. She was the flagship of Admiral Balchen, and in 1744 was caught by a tremendous gale in the chops of the Channel, disappeared, with torn canvas and slanting masts, beyond the sky-line, and was never heard of again. She is believed to have run on the Casquets; but no trace of the ill-fated ship was ever discovered, and of her crew of 1000 men not one survived.

The present *Victory* was launched from Chatham Dockyard in 1765, so that she has been afloat for nearly a century and a half. She is a little ship, measured by the scale of modern battleships. Her length from figure-

head to taffrail is 226 feet; the actual length of keel is only 151 feet. She has an extreme beam of fifty-two feet, and a displacement of 2162 tons. These are, for a ship which has played so famous a part in sea-history, surprisingly modest dimensions. The first Dreadnought had a length of 490 feet—more than double the length of the *Victory*—and a displacement of 17,900 tons. The later Dreadnoughts—of the *Lion* class—are nearly three times as long as the *Victory*—660 feet—with a displacement of over 26,000 tons, and they have engines of 70,000 horse-power, capable of driving the vast steel-cased hull through the sea at the rate of thirty knots an hour. Compared with monsters of this scale, the *Victory* is only a toy. The bigger Dreadnoughts have more than ten times her tonnage. The latest Cunarder will be more than 900 feet in length—four times, that is, the length of the *Victory*, and twenty times her tonnage.

But the build and equipment of the *Victory* may help us to realize how close, and how deadly, was the fighting in the naval battles of Nelson's day. Here is a ship of a little over 2000 tons; her main gun-deck has a length of only 186 feet; there are wide open ports in her wooden sides. She is in effect a floating box of very moderate dimensions, with sides of planks. But she carried a crew of over 1000 men, and on her triple gun-decks were crowded 104 guns. The decks are low, and the huge beams make them lower still. A man of average height can hardly stand upright without knocking his head against the beams that carry the deck above.

It is easy to picture the scene such a ship must have presented in battle: the curving lines of guns, each with its half-naked crew, and its rough equipment of rope; the officers standing, sword in hand, behind each battery; the running powder monkeys, the

smoke, the shouts, the roar of the broadsides, the backward leap of the great guns, the stream of the wounded. And all this crowded, deck above deck, into a wooden box a little over 200 feet long, only fifty-two feet broad, with a depth of twenty-one feet! What an interval parts the *Victory* from, say, a Dreadnought, with its vast bulk, its 10-inch steel armor, its huge guns behind their metal hoods, its captain in a shot-proof conning-tower. At Trafalgar the *Victory* had two French line of battleships and the biggest Spaniard—the *Santa Trinidad*—firing on her for hours with guns almost touching—in the case of the *Redoubtable*, with guns *actually* touching—her sides! It is a wonder that any of her crew survived, or that she herself floated.

The famous ship lying in Portsmouth Harbor has a picturesque history. After she was launched she lay at her moorings uncommissioned, and without vocation or use, for thirteen years. It seemed as if she had been built by mistake. But in 1778 war with France was imminent, and English dockyards became busy. Then the *Victory* was remembered, and Admiral Keppel hoisted his flag on her as Commander of the Channel Fleet. She had a stormy commission of five years, though the tedious battle methods of that period added no particular splendor to the British flag. The *Victory* took part in the manœuvres between Keppel and D'Orvilliers off Ushant in 1778. In that engagement Keppel, it is curious to note, drew off from exactly such a combination of French and Spanish fleets outside Cadiz as that which twenty-seven years later Nelson, in the same waters, fought and destroyed at Trafalgar. In the splutter of battle under Keppel the *Victory* had, at one moment, no less than six French ships firing on her; but French shooting at that period was of very poor quality, and the British ship lost only

eleven killed and twenty-four wounded.

Sir Charles Hardy hoisted his flag on the *Victory* in 1779, and he had an even less satisfactory brush with the French off the Scilly Islands than Keppel had outside Cadiz, finally drawing off and making sail for Spithead; this, it is gravely recorded, being the only time the *Victory* showed her stern to a French line of battle.

It is curious to stand to-day on the quarter-deck of the historic ship and call up a picture of all the sea captains whose feet have trodden its planks. Good fighting men, no doubt, all of them, but without any special genius for leadership, or hampered by vicious tactical theories; the *Victory* certainly won no special fame under their flags. British seamen had hardly mastered the secret, which Rodney tried to teach them, of making a naval action decisive.

The *Victory* carried, in turn, Geary's flag and Darby's; then she was Hyde Parker's flagship in the North Sea, and Kempenfelt's—the "brave Kempenfelt" of Cowper's ballad—in the Channel. In December 1781, Kempenfelt fought a brilliant little action off Ushant, in which he repeated—on a small scale—Rodney's tactics at the Battle of the Saints. He broke through the enemy's line, sank four frigates, and captured one whole division of the convoy the Frenchmen were guarding. A little over seven months later—in August 1782—the *Royal George*, on which Kempenfelt had now hoisted his flag, sank at her moorings at Spithead, and 900 of her crew perished. The *Victory* was moored only a short distance off, and her boats saved many of the ill-fated flagship's crew.

Lord Howe—the "Black Dick" of fore-castle vernacular—next hoisted his flag on the *Victory*, and in a pottering, semi-accidental fashion, relieved the British garrison of Gibraltar, at that moment hard pressed by the combined

French and Spanish fleets. In February 1783 the *Victory* was paid off. She had completed her second commission of five years, during which, if she had taken part in no brilliant victories, she had won the reputation of being the fastest three-decker afloat. She was Hood's flagship in 1790, and during his commission took part in the occupation of Toulon; she was thus one of the ships on which Bonaparte trained his guns when he first broke into history as an artillery officer.

In the stormy days that followed, the *Victory* naturally saw much service. Nelson, then commanding the *Agamemnon*, first came into touch at the siege of Calvi with the ship in which he was to win his most famous victory. Jervis, in the great fight off Cape St. Vincent in 1797, flew his flag on the *Victory*; and it was standing on the quarter-deck where Nelson, eight years later, fell under a French bullet that he watched the *Agamemnon*, under Nelson's command, bear up from the British line athwart the track on which the weather division of the Spanish fleet was running down before the wind to join their sister ships to leeward. The fight off Cape St. Vincent lifted Nelson into fame, but the *Victory* cannot be said to have taken a very active part in the battle. She had but one man killed and eight wounded by the Spanish fire.

During the long blockade of Cadiz which followed the fight off Cape St. Vincent the *Victory* was sent home. She was, strange to say, regarded as unfit for further active service, and sank to the rank of a mere hulk. For two years she was employed as a prison hospital-ship; yet she was perfectly sound, and was still the best sea-boat and the fastest battleship in the British Navy. In 1801 she was put in thorough repair, but for two years remained unemployed. In 1803, however, Nelson was Commander-in-

Chief in the Mediterranean, and to his eager, impatient spirit a slow ship was intolerable. He knew the *Victory's* sailing qualities, and chose her to carry his flag, and so came the two memorable years which lifted the ship into undying fame. She took part in the long blockade of Toulon, and in the double pursuit of Villeneuve. For two years Nelson never left the ship. Then came the great day of Trafalgar.

What other ship known to history has a story such as is here briefly sketched? The visitor who can stand on the *Victory's* deck to-day and, looking round, picture the many battles through which she has passed, the storms which have beaten upon her, the procession of sea-dogs who have fought her guns, and the sea-captains who have trodden her quarter-deck, and not feel his blood quicken must have a singularly torpid—or tepid—imagination.

The quarter-deck of the *Victory* is exactly as it was when Nelson—walking on it with Hardy at his side—was struck by a French bullet. It is open and unsheltered; the tall masts of the *Redoubtable*—its tops venomous with musketry fire—commanded it at less than pistol-shot distance. Nelson, it must be remembered, kept his tops clear of muskets, lest they should interfere with the working of the sails, or even perhaps set fire to them; and this enabled the men in the French tops to ply their muskets in security. As a matter of fact they well-nigh cleared the *Victory's* upper-deck, shooting down at leisure almost every figure visible on it. The wonder is that they took so long to hit that little one-armed figure walking beside Hardy; and how Hardy, with his six feet of massive height, escaped.

A brass plate, with the inscription "Here Nelson fell," marks exactly where Nelson stood when the fatal shot struck him. A little patch—only a

few inches square—of the actual timber of the deck is beneath the plate. It is so tiny that it wears a depressingly pinched and economical look. If a section of the deck of adequate size had been preserved, and railed in, it would have been much more impressive.

Aft of the quarter-deck, and on a higher level, is the poop. Artists are apt to sacrifice prosaic facts to picturesqueness; and both West and Turner, in their pictures of "The Death of Nelson," represent him as being surrounded by a whole crowd of figures in artistic costumes and appropriate attitudes. The quarter-deck and the tops are crowded, while the poop, with its array of spectators, resembles nothing so much as the boxes in a theatre when a popular play is on. MacIise even introduces women into the crowd on the deck! As a matter of fact, of course, the *Victory's* tops were empty, and her upper-deck, at the moment when Nelson fell, was almost as naked as her tops. The bitter fire from the *Redoubtable* had cleared it. A sergeant of marines and a couple of seamen formed, with Hardy, the group immediately round Nelson. From the edge of the poop just above some marines and a pair of middles may have leaned over to watch Nelson as he attempted to rise. Hardy was stooping over him; they may have heard Nelson's words, "They have got me at last, Hardy."

That scene has made the quarter-deck sacred for all time. To-day the flags which spelt out the famous signal "England expects," &c., are painted on the wheel under the shelter of the poop, with another cluster of flags yet more expressive of Nelson's fighting genius—his standing battle-signal for "Closer action."

A few steps from the spot where Nelson fell is the hatchway down which, with his shattered spine, he was carried. There was no "first-aid"

in those days; ambulances were not yet invented. The steps down the hatchway leading from the upperdeck are steep and ill-lit, and how much Nelson suffered while being jolted down them can be guessed. Then he was carried along the deck forward to the hatchway which led to the next lower deck. It was while he was being borne past the men working at their guns that the mortally wounded Admiral drew his handkerchief across his face and covered the medals on his breast. He knew that the sight of his stricken figure would discourage his seamen. But he was still the Commander; his keen eye saw everything. As he passed the tiller by which the *Victory* was being steered—her wheel had been shattered—he noticed that the ropes were slack, and he whispered the order to "taughten the tiller ropes."

Down ladder after ladder, hatchway after hatchway, the poor shot-torn body was carried, till the orlop deck was reached. This was deep below the water-line. No gleam of natural light, no breath of sun-cleansed air, ever reached it. A little section of this deck aft forms the cock-pit. It is black, low, airless. In the centre is a long rough table, dimly lit, at the moment when Nelson was carried into it, by a couple of lanterns. The table was splashed with blood, for the wounded came in quick succession, and the tolling bare-armed surgeons were busy over one shattered and bleeding figure after another. The floor of the cock-pit was packed thick with dead or wounded men; for the *Victory*, it must be remembered, had 160 of its crew killed or wounded in the engagement.

As the visitor stands to-day in that dark chamber, stooping his head lest he strike the beams that carry the deck above, he tries to imagine the ill-lit, airless cock-pit, with over 100 dead or dying men lying on its floor. And

there were no anæsthetics or antiseptics in those days!

On the port side of the cock-pit is a recess, perhaps twenty feet by ten feet in area; and here, on the purser's bed, the body of Nelson was laid. What a scene the cock-pit must, at that moment, have presented: the gloom, the heat, the groans of dying men, the ceaseless stream of the wounded, the cries of the victims on the operating-table, over whom the surgeons bent. The choking air explains Nelson's oft-repeated entreaty, "Fan! Fan!" Always, too, there was the roar of the guns, shaking every timber in the hull of the *Victory*, and this drew from Nelson the pathetic words, "O, *Victory*, *Victory*, how you distract my poor brain."

The spot is marked to-day by a curt inscription, "Here Nelson died, October 21, 1805." Hanging from the low beam just above are two clumsy lanterns, the original horn-lanterns that shed their light on Nelson's dying features. Laurel-leaves—withered, alas!—are strewn over the deck immediately in front of the spot.

How much of the old ship remains? The original masts and yards are gone; the French and Spanish guns at Trafalgar shattered them too completely for further use. The present masts were taken from a smaller and later ship; they lack the soaring height and the wide-spread yards of the ship that bore down on the Franco-Spanish line on October 21, 1805. The hull has been sheathed in teak; the planks in the two upper decks are new. But the lower decks are exactly as at Trafalgar; and the tough enduring oak looks as solid as when it shook to the thunder of the guns in the great fight and was reddened with the blood of the actual fighters. Of the 104 guns the *Victory* carried on that day only twelve remain—four twenty-four-pounders on the middle deck and eight thirty-two-

pounders on the lower deck. The thirty-two-pounders are very fine pieces—models of clean and solid casting, with the sighting cut still sharp on breech and muzzle.

What fierce eyes squinted along these massive tubes, to align them, say, with the stern-windows of the *Buc-centaure*, or with the side-ports of the *Redoubtable*? From those guns rolled the smoke which, in George Meredith's pregnant phrase, "darkened the blaze of Austerlitz." As the visitor looks at them, then, stooping, glances, with uninstructed and modern eyes, along the "sights," the whole scene these low decks witnessed grows vivid to his imagination: the eddying smoke, the bending half-naked figures of the seamen, the blast of the swift following broadsides, the backward leap of the guns. But what became of the other ninety-two guns which talked in such convincing accents to Frenchman and Spaniard during the stormy hours of Trafalgar? Those bits of heroic metal were surely worth preserving! What city in the Empire would not have given a place of honor in its public gardens to one of the *Victory's* guns from Trafalgar?

There are many interesting relics on the *Victory*. Here is the tiny drum that beat the call to quarters on that far-off day. Its parchment has lost all resonance—it is black with age; but what echoes that little patch of beaten skin has awakened! A powder-bucket used in the battle is preserved, and one pictures the bare-legged powder monkey that carried it, running to and fro with nimble, boyish feet, and staring with round, boyish eyes at the dead and the wounded lying about him.

A sponge, rammer, worm, &c., part of the gun-equipment of Trafalgar, remain; but of even greater interest—because more suggestive—is a specimen of what is called the rope-sponge and

rammer in use at that period. Nelson believed in close fighting; a British ship was, if possible, to rub sides with its antagonist when in action. But when this happened the ordinary appliances—the sponge and rammer, with their long wooden handles—were useless; there was not space to use them! So there was provided for each gun a set of sponges and rammers attached to short pieces of thick rope; and this enabled a gun to be sponged and loaded when its muzzle was almost touching the side of the enemy's ship. To-day the *Victory* has six Q.F. Nordenfeldt guns—harmless six-pounders for saluting use. She has a crew—officers, signalmen, marines—numbering exactly forty.

The original ward-room of the *Victory* is now used by the officers on board, and it is interesting to meditate on the faces—weather-beaten, but bold and keen—which once gathered round the table in this room, and to imagine the sea-jests which kindled laughter about it. A photograph of the men who sat at the table here on the morning of the day of Trafalgar—and those who were there at the first meal after Trafalgar—would be of curious interest.

Hardy's cabin—or the space covered by it—is occupied by the state barge in which Nelson's body, on January 8, 1806, was taken from Greenwich to Whitehall Stairs. The barge at one time belonged to George III. It still carries the oars, &c., used on the day of Nelson's funeral.

The figure-head of the *Victory* on the day of the battle consisted of a coat of arms, with a sailor on one side and a marine on the other as supporters. A French shot carried away both the legs of the marine and the arms of the sailor; and fore-castle tradition reports that all the men who lost legs in the action were marines, and those who lost arms were sailors! To-day the

figure-head is practically the same as that which broke through the smoke at Trafalgar; but two little boys have taken the place of both marine and sailor, and lean their smiling wooden cheeks on the shield.

Not the least interesting relics of the great fight are the fore-and-main-topsails, which swelled to the soft south-west wind on that far-off morning and helped to carry the *Victory* into the fight. The French fired high, and from a distance, and their shot naturally told on the *Victory's* sails. In the fore-topsail may be counted ninety shot-holes: one long rent is said to be the actual mark left by the first shot that struck the ship. The main-topsail has sixty shot-holes in it. It illustrates the different fighting tactics adopted by Nelson to remember that the *Victory* did not fire a gun till she slowly moved past the stern-wind-downs of the *Bucentaure*, the flag from the Frenchman actually brushing her rigging. Then the British guns spoke.

In the little museum of the ship are two of the original Muster Books, with the prize list of Trafalgar. It is dated November 1807, more than two years after Trafalgar was fought. The signatures of the actual fighters are here, column after column. A midshipman's share of the prize money was £26 0s. 6d.; and the visitor is perplexed to note that at least every third midshipman signed the receipt with his mark!

No one remembers any service rendered by the *Victory* after Trafalgar; as a matter of fact little was left for British ships and British seamen to achieve. The *Victory* was commissioned by Sir James Saumarez in 1808 for service in the Baltic, and carried his flag for four years. She helped to bring home the survivors of Moore's army after Corunna. For months during 1809 she took part in the blockade of the Russian fleet in Kronstadt. The last active service of the famous

ship closed when, in October 1812, Saumarez sent his flagship home. It was proposed to commission her again in 1815, and no less than six Admirals who had applied for commands named the *Victory* as their intended flagship. But Waterloo came, and with it the long peace; since then the *Victory* has never heard a shot fired in anger.

A little more than seven years ago, however—in 1903—the famous ship well-nigh came to a sudden and ignoble end. An old battleship, the *Neptune*—worthy of a better fate—had been sold to a German firm in Hamburg, and was being towed out of Portsmouth. A westerly gale was blowing, there was a high flood-tide, and when the *Neptune*, in charge of a couple of tugs, neared the mouth of the harbor, she swung round with the wind and tide, the towing hawsers parted, and the old battleship drifted broadside up the harbor. She rammed the *Victory*, making a hole some six feet by two feet below the water-line in her wooden sides. The sorely injured ship was got, with difficulty, and half sunken, into dock. To have been sunk at her moorings by a sister battleship would have been a singularly ignoble close to the great ship's record.

We go back to the quarter-deck with its curt, pathetic record, "Here Nelson fell." Everything fits the scene: the long deck, the high and massive bulwarks, the flag—which Nelson died to keep flying—fluttering in the soft breeze above, the wheel behind with its immortal message spelt out in tiny painted flags. The common routine of the ship is, fitly enough, going on at

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the moment. Two seamen are rolling up a sail; another is coiling up a water-hose. Across a narrow strip of water lie some drab-tinted sea-giants of the modern type—one, the most formidable battleship afloat, with its ten 13-inch guns. With what shrewd and eager eyes Nelson would have studied that latest embodiment of British sea-power!

But if Nelson stood on the deck of his flagship as it lies in Portsmouth Harbor to-day, and looked round, the scene—in its main features—would be quite familiar to him. There are still the low tree-clad hills above the town; the narrow gap into the harbor; the sloping "Hard," with its line of shops behind and fringe of boats in front. The rocky shore-line is thick and slippery with green seaweed; for the tide rises and falls still just as it did in those stormy days when the bluff-bowed three-deckers went and came through that narrow entrance into the port.

But just now the tide is ebbing; and as the evening darkens it seems to whisper round the stem of the *Victory* a lament for the greatest seaman of our race. The poets are the best interpreters of any deep and enduring sentiment, and Tennyson's words about Nelson are true to-day:

Thine Island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.

George Meredith's lines on Nelson, too, are both fine and true:

He leads! We hear our seaman's call,
In the roll of battles won.
For this is Britain's admiral
Till setting of her sun.

W. H. Fitchett.

THE LANTERN BEARERS.

BY MRS. ALFRED SIDGWICK, AUTHOR OF "THE SEVERINS," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

When Helga got home, she found that no change had taken place in her father's condition. He still lay in a semi-conscious stupor, able to move and take food, and when his wife addressed him to answer her. But Mrs. Byrne saw that his mind was only half awake, and that the best she could do for him was to keep him quiet. Her anxiety about the consequences of what he had done became more acute every moment. She felt sure that in a civilized land men were not allowed to use personal violence, and she trembled at every sound, lest it should be the police come to arrest her husband. She tried not to think that Mr. Ashley might die of his injuries, but though she drove the idea from her, it came and came again with sickening persistence. Helga saw that her mother was overwrought and suffering intensely. Mrs. Byrne's voice was unsteady, her hands were like ice, and her face looked gray and drawn. She sat near the dining-room window and watched the street, and she had wrapped herself in an old cloak because there was no fire.

"Come down and get warm by the kitchen fire," said Helga.

"That has been out for hours," said Mrs. Byrne. "To-morrow I shall not light it at all. We can boil a kettle for our tea on the gas."

"But we must have one warm room in this winter weather," said Helga, shivering.

"There is no such thing as must, when you have no money," said Mrs. Byrne. "If you can't live you die. We are just the kind it happens to. We can't beg."

This was so unlike her mother, so opposite to every maxim of courage and effort the girl had ever heard,

that she could hardly believe her ears.

"Come down and let me light the fire again, and make tea," she said tenderly. "There's no sense in being ill, and we certainly shall be, if we starve and freeze."

"If he could be moved I would get him away," murmured Mrs. Byrne; "I have been wondering if I could, and where we could go——"

"I don't believe that would be wise," said Helga, reflectively. "Besides, it's impossible. We haven't money enough to go far."

"But, Helga—what shall we do if Mr. Ashley dies?"

"He won't die."

Mrs. Byrne shuddered. The dread in her mind had grown to such proportions, that it possessed her like an incubus, driving even the spectre of want to the background. If Mr. Ashley died, her husband would have killed him, and he would be torn from her, Heaven only knew to what a fate. She stared into the darkening street, and did not speak. The short winter afternoon was over already, and beyond the drip and the fog she could see the opposite garden wall, and high leafless trees. Helga stood beside her, and looked out too. The girl had it in her power to relieve her mother's worst fears, and she wanted to do it without causing her a new trouble. She wanted to tell the truth, but not the whole truth, always a delicate and difficult operation; for one word brings another, and if you are not skilful before you have advanced very far you are either a liar, or a fool, with what you would hide plucked from you. Silence would have been easier, but Helga could no longer keep it.

"Mr. Ashley is not in any danger, Mummy," she said, trying to speak in a matter-of-fact voice.

Mrs. Byrne's attention was attracted as suddenly and entirely as Helga could have wished.

"How do you know?" she said.

"Just now—down by the river—I saw his son again and spoke to him."

"What did he say?" The question came eagerly before any comment, but Helga saw that a flash of surprise and uneasiness accompanied it.

"The doctors are not alarmed. They expect him to recover consciousness soon, and to be all right in a week or two. His son hopes there will be no prosecution. If he can stop it he will."

"But, Helga," said Mrs. Byrne, "how is it that on such a day as this, and after such a thing has happened, you meet Clive Ashley—by the river? I hope it was by accident, though what the young man should want there, on Christmas Day, when his father must be lying ill——"

"It is most fortunate that I did meet him, and could bring you this news," said Helga; "now we probably know the worst. When Dad is better, he will have to find new work, and till he does we shall have some anxiety. I wish I could earn my living. I am sure I ought not to be here, eating you out of house and home."

"My darling child!" said Mrs. Byrne, half comforted, half uneasy still. The chance meeting by the river did not sound like chance, and Helga's disappearance for several hours on this sad Christmas afternoon reminded Mrs. Byrne of other occasions, some weeks ago, when her long absences could hardly be explained by her love of exercise.

"I think, Helga, that for the present you had better keep away from the river," she said, after some consideration. "I am relieved—immensely relieved—to hear that no great harm was done yesterday; but the thought of any understanding between you and that young man is like a nightmare.

It could only lead to sorrow. His father would shut his door in your face, and your father—it could never even reach his ears unless we wished to kill him."

Helga listened in silence, neither confessing nor denying, and when a decent pause had followed her mother's admonition, she went out of the room. She was glad that she had not arranged to meet Clive again before he went to France, and she made up her mind that in her letters to him she would dwell more than ever on the rift that must keep them apart. That little hope, that little flame, lighted by love, made inextinguishable by marriage, burnt without warmth and glow in these gray days. It was impossible to believe that their joined lives would ever run happily together.

The week between Christmas and New Year passed slowly. The pinch of worse poverty made itself felt already in scantier meals and fireless rooms. Mrs. Byrne took it on herself, before she could discuss the matter with her husband, to try to sublet the house at once, so that they might sell most of their furniture and move into a very small house, or even two or three rooms.

"But moving costs money," objected Helga.

Mrs. Byrne did not argue with the girl. She foresaw worse hours than Helga, with her want of experience, could imagine. If they lived on in this house while no money came in, they must inevitably sell their furniture. A story told her by a nurse who had once attended her in an illness, came back to her, as a true story will, with terror. The nurse had been called to a case of double pneumonia lately, she said, and had nursed her patient till he died in a house that held nothing but the bed on which he lay. Everything else had been removed to satisfy his creditors, and it was only by the

charity of friends that money had been found for the nurse, and for the few necessities she had to collect around her. The picture of the lonely man dying amongst strangers in his ruined home came back with persistence as Mrs. Byrne saw her own home threatened. But she pursued her usual tactics, provided as best she could for the worst, kept her fears to herself, and quietly did the work each day brought with it. Her outward calm gave her husband courage, and directly he was up and about again he went to the City in search of work.

But that was not to be had for the asking. He was an elderly gentleman fallen on evil days. The manual labor always wanted he could not do. The clerk's work he understood he could not get. Every night he came back with the same story. The desks were all full, the doors were all closed. Trade was bad, and firms were dismissing men, not taking them on. One day he came back from the study of advertisements in the Free Library with a piece of news that fell like a fresh blow on the little household. He had seen the announcement in the *Times* of Mrs. Warwick's sudden and unexpected death at Rome. That was a friend gone from the small number of those left, and a friend whose urbane and kindly enjoyment of life made all who knew her wish her lengthened days. Helga grieved sincerely. Mrs. Warwick was associated with Clive in many memories, and the girl had felt assured of her sympathy. She had sometimes thought of her as a possible mediator in case mediation ever looked practicable; and she always thought of her as the friend who had sought her out and led her into light, where love had found her.

Just before New Year Mrs. Byrne began to look so anxious that her husband put his pride in his pocket, sought an interview with Mr. Rossiter, and

asked to be taken back, or at any rate recommended. But from that adventure he came back nearly as ill as on Christmas Eve. His late chief was furious with him, and threatened him with the police if he showed his face again. For what was Mr. Byrne to Mr. Rossiter? An elderly clerk who had assaulted the firm's best customer in the private office. Could the City of London continue if such things were condoned? In Mr. Rossiter's opinion Mr. Byrne ought not to be at large. "It was a private quarrel," Mr. Byrne argued. "That only made it worse," said Mr. Rossiter, and compared the case with a notorious one of an elderly tradesman who had been shot dead by a young one in satisfaction of an imaginary grudge. Mr. Byrne said heatedly that his grudge was real, and immediately after found himself firmly ushered to the door. Mr. Rossiter was too busy, he said, to listen to grievances he could not remedy, even if he believed in them. Men with grievances were nearly always men of no account. Sensible people expected to meet knaves on their way through the world, were on their guard against them, and if they got the worst of it took the lesson to heart and got the best of it next time. A man who tumbled down the ladder usually had himself to thank if the truth was known. And so on. Every one knows the sort of sermons preached by the Mr. Rossiters of the world, and the amount of use and comfort they are to the men who serve them as examples. Mr. Byrne spent the rest of the day walking up and down office stairs, and in watching and envying other men who were at work and receiving regular pay that they could carry home to wife and child. Next day he humbled himself again, and beat up some of the men he had known as equals in his prosperous days. But for ten years they had lost sight of him. When he

reappeared, a broken man seeking employment, some got rid of him with fair promises, some with cold refusals, and one, kinder than others, offered him a five-pound note for his immediate needs. The story of his attack on John Ashley had got about in the City, and men believed that trouble had crazed him, and that he was dangerous. Every business man sees such tragedies of failure, but no one wants to employ or recommend them. Poor Mr. Byrne was in as bad a plight as a dog suspected by a crowd of madness, and hunted away with sticks and stones. After a week of it he understood that he must go lower for a new foothold, but where to go he hardly knew. He seemed to possess nothing with a market value.

On New Year's Eve Conrad came back in time, according to his promise, to brew punch and wish them a happy New Year. He arrived in high spirits, and brought a case full of fresh Hamburg delicacies for Mrs. Byrne, and a great box of chocolates for Helga. He was so full of his own home news and of a visit he had paid to Tante Malchen that at first he did not notice the cloud on the household. The ladies did not draw his attention to it, and Mr. Byrne was not more taciturn than usual. It was not till long after dinner, when they were all sitting round the fire, that he asked them whether anything had happened while he was away. The dead silence that ensued told him that something was wrong, and so did the glance of anxiety with which Mrs. Byrne watched her husband get up from his chair.

"You're not going?" she said.

"I must," he said; "I'm as tired as a dog."

Mrs. Byrne went out of the room with him, and left Helga alone with Conrad. He looked at his watch.

"It is only ten o'clock," he said, "I hope you are not tired. It would be

dreadful to sit up by myself. I could not sleep the New Year in. I have never done such a thing."

"I am not tired," said Helga, absently. She found that it was pleasant to see the cheerful little gentleman again. They had so few friends, and he was always kindly. He seemed to enjoy the intimate comfort of her home, and she wondered whether he would have any practical suggestions to make when he heard that it was threatened. She had never realized how much comfort had been left to them all through these lean years, till she saw worse times on the way. Tonight they were sitting in the dining-room, because Conrad had said the table would be useful when he brewed his punch. It had been pushed back against the wall, and four easy chairs were gathered near the hearth. The brass fender and fireirons shone in the firelight; the old red curtains shut out the winter weather; the lamp lit up an immense photograph of the Dresden Madonna over the chimney-piece; the recesses on either side of the fireplace were lined from top to bottom with books.

"In some ways," said Conrad, "I shall have my house like an English one when I am married."

"In which ways?" asked Helga. "Will you have open fires?"

"I am afraid that would be impossible," he said, with an air of apology. "Do you think they are necessary to one's happiness?"

Helga was sewing, but she put down her work for a minute to consider his question.

"I suppose you had never seen one till you came here," she said. "You will soon get used to your closed stoves again."

"But will my wife like them?"

"She will probably prefer them because she has never seen anything else. A girl brought up in Hamburg—"

Conrad heaved a sigh, such a heavy artificial one that Helga stopped short.

"Aren't you well?" she said anxiously, for she had told her mother not to give his delicate digestion mincepies after a sea journey; but Mrs. Byrne had not followed her advice and he had eaten three.

"I am quite well," he said; "but I have something most important to say to you, and I wish I could think you were in the mood to listen."

Helga guessed what was coming and wished she could stop it half-way. She made up her mind hurriedly that at any rate before he spoke he should be told of the change in their circumstances.

"You don't know yet what has happened," she began; "just now, when you asked, no one spoke, but sooner or later you are bound to hear."

"What is it?" cried Conrad, alarmed by her manner.

"My father has lost his work."

Conrad looked both serious and relieved.

"I saw that something was wrong," he said; "but that is a trouble that can be mended. We shall find him other work. I shall go to my cousin about it to-morrow."

"You are very good," said Helga.

"Goodness has nothing whatever to do with it," said Conrad.

"You don't know the whole story yet," said Helga. "On Christmas Eve, when my mother and I were waiting to light the tree, my father arrived home white and trembling, his clothes torn, his face cut and bruised."

"An accident?"

"No—a quarrel. He had taken the law into his own hands and beaten a man."

"What else can one do in this country?"

"But it happened in the office, so he cannot go back there or even get a recommendation. Besides, we don't

know yet what will happen. The man he quarrelled with may prosecute him—may put him in prison we suppose. We don't know. The suspense and uncertainty has lasted a week now, and every hour makes it more unbearable. I feel inclined to go to the man's house and say, What is the worst you can do? What will you do? Anything would be better than not knowing."

"Now I understand what I have seen in your faces all the evening," said Conrad. "You have not told me who the man is with whom your father quarrelled, but I suppose it is Mr. Ashley, the father of the young man we met at Mrs. Warwick's tennis party."

"Yes," said Helga; and then she told him of Mrs. Warwick's death in Rome.

"She was the one friend left to us from old times," she said; "if she had been here I could have gone to her for help and advice. Now there is no one."

"But what will happen?" asked Conrad. "How are such things managed in England?"

"None of us know much about it," said Helga.

"We must find out at once," said Conrad.

Helga sighed and went on sewing. She had nipped Conrad's proposal in the bud and was both thankful and dejected. She did not want the proposal, and yet felt sad because it had hung fire. No doubt he looked forward to the time when her father would sit in prison and she with her mother would be destitute. The shadow of disgrace and penury hung near her now and made her undesirable. He would try to befriend them because he had a loyal heart, but he no longer wished to join his life with hers. Probably he considered his parents in the matter. She did not want Conrad, but to see that he did not want her hurt shrewdly. She suddenly raised her head, looked at him, and

spoke with hot emphasis of what was in her mind.

"My father is not to blame," she said, "whatever the stupid laws do to him he is not to blame. If they put him in prison I shall think he was right. That man ruined him, and he was insulting the other night in his manner. My father lost his head, but he has endured a great deal for years."

Mrs. Byrne coming in a moment later was puzzled and mildly shocked to find the two young people in a state of odd excitement shaking each other by the hand. "Can they be betrothed?" she asked herself, but they did not look like it. Helga's face was still tense with indignation, and Conrad was calling something she had said highly praiseworthy.

"What is so praiseworthy?" asked Mrs. Byrne.

"That a man should defend his honor, that a girl should defend her father," said Conrad, sentimentously, and when Helga went out of the room to fetch something wanted for the punch he turned to Mrs. Byrne and made a little speech.

"It was my intention to ask Helga to become engaged to me to-night," he said; "I have explained to my parents that I cannot live without her and they have said that if it is for my happiness they will raise no further objections."

"I suppose they had no objections beyond her want of money," said Mrs. Byrne.

"They did not mind that half as much as her English parentage," explained Conrad. "It is true that she is your child, but unfortunately her name is Byrne, and it is not a name known in Hamburg."

"That is the worst of a mixed marriage," said Mrs. Byrne. "My husband's people knew nothing of my family. I dropped from the blue amongst them."

"They might have informed themselves," said Conrad.

"People don't take the trouble. They say, oh! he married some one queer, a foreigner."

"I know," said Conrad, with feeling; "Helga and I will have to face that, and in time she will live it down. I shall always say that my wife's grandfather was the celebrated Professor Knoblauch; I need never mention any Byrnes."

"You are looking forward," said Mrs. Byrne, "the marriage may never take place."

"I hope it will," said Conrad; "but I owe it to my parents to wait until this cloud has blown away."

"Perhaps it will grow bigger."

"I intend to disperse it," said Conrad. "To-morrow I shall take the matter in hand."

Mrs. Byrne did not ask him what he thought he could do, because Helga came back just then, bringing ingredients for the punch.

When Conrad had brewed it and presented it hot and steaming to the ladies, he waited, watch in hand, for the approach of midnight, and at the right moment drew back the curtains and opened the window that they might hear the midnight bells. The chill air made them all shiver, and Helga, looking out into the darkness, thought she saw the days to come black and desolate. She turned back towards the warm, lighted room, the little niche in the world her father and mother had made for her. A flood of tenderness, a stricken conscience, drove her to her mother's side, but she could only kiss her silently. To speak of a happy new year would have seemed like mockery. A moment later, however, the bells pealed out, and Conrad, full of hope and self-confidence, was shaking them vigorously by the hand.

"*Prosit Neujahr*," he cried.

(To be continued.)

OUR PERSIAN POLICY.

I have a sort of suspicion that we are drifting into dark and perilous paths in our Persian policy, and it may even happen that Persian independence will vanish while we are discussing by what methods it may be maintained.—*Lord Curzon* in the House of Lords, 7th of December 1911.

Whatever may be the result of the recent crisis in Persia, it cannot be said that the part played by the Government of Great Britain was a very heroic or creditable one. To watch an ancient and friendly nation, with whom we are bound by so many ties, and against whom we have no sort of quarrel, punished and humiliated for offences which so far as they have been disclosed were utterly undeserving of such treatment; to see her territory invaded by hostile forces, and her Constitution threatened or destroyed, would in itself be sufficiently serious. But when it is remembered that the Russian Government has acted throughout with the diplomatic support of Great Britain, so that we are partners, however reluctant, in all that has occurred, there is no wonder that public opinion in this country is puzzled and alarmed.

Of course, there may be good reasons which cannot now be disclosed. The Persian question, we are frequently told, must not be considered alone. The exigencies of the Triple Entente, our own strained relations with Germany, the danger of Russia being drawn within that orbit of diplomacy—all these, it is said, must be borne in mind if the Persian question is to be usefully discussed.

Such considerations as these would be beyond the scope of this article, even if there were sufficient material for discussing them. But it may still be worth while to consider, in the light

of our public engagements, the events of the last two months—to try and estimate, apart from the European situation, what the crisis in Persia has cost us.

The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 was based upon the principle of Persian independence, which for nearly a hundred years it has been the aim of British policy to maintain. The Agreement opened with a solemn recital that the two Governments had mutually engaged to "respect the integrity and independence of Persia." The "spheres of influence" which it created were of a commercial character only. They were intended to put an end to the rivalries of British and Russian "concession hunters," and to the friction to which such rivalries had led; "to prevent," as Sir Edward Grey expressed it, "the two nations mining and counter-mining against each other in the somewhat squalid diplomatic struggle which had gone on for years—one trying to gain an advantage at the expense of the other." Within the Russian sphere Great Britain undertook not to seek for herself, and not to support in favor of British subjects, any concessions of a commercial or political nature, such as concessions for banks, railways, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c., and the Russian Government gave a similar undertaking as regards the British sphere. So anxious indeed was Sir Edward Grey to prevent misunderstanding on this point, that at the end of the speech which he made explaining the Convention, he went out of his way to assure the House of Commons that his use of the term "British and Russian spheres" must not be taken in any wider sense. "I have used," he said, "the term 'British and Russian spheres.' I trust that it will be noted and understood that I

have used it solely in the sense in which it is used in this Agreement, and *not* in the sense of the political partition of Persia. Under the Agreement we bind ourselves not to seek certain concessions of a certain kind in certain spheres. But these are only British and Russian spheres in a sense which is in no way derogatory to the independence and sovereignty of Persia." (House of Commons, the 17th of February 1908.)

But the Convention did not stand alone. It was accompanied by a solemn Declaration contained in a written memorandum, and presented in the name of both Governments by Sir Cecil Spring Rice, our Minister at Teheran, to the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs. This Declaration, which was afterwards published in the Persian Press, was intended to allay the discontent and anxiety to which the Convention had given rise; to assure Persia, as Sir Edward Grey expressed it, that it was not the object of the Anglo-Russian Agreement to threaten Persian independence or to embark on any policy which would partition Persia. What the two Powers desired was to prevent difficulties by guaranteeing that neither Power should aim at acquiring influence in the parts of Persia adjacent to the frontier of the other; that they should not allow one another to intervene on the pretext of safeguarding their interests, but should give to Persia a fair opportunity of building up again her own fortunes. And in a well-known passage it continued:

This Agreement between the two European Powers which have the greatest interests in Persia, based as it is on a guarantee of her independence and integrity, can only serve to further and promote Persian interests, for henceforth Persia, aided and assisted by these two powerful neighboring States, can employ all her powers in internal reforms.

Such were the solemn professions made to the Persian people only four years ago. In what way have they been fulfilled? The events that led to the recent crisis give only too clear an answer.

The Persians had taken the two Powers at their word. After deposing a corrupt and tyrannical ruler, they were engaged—slowly it is true, but with great courage and persistence—in endeavoring to build up the fortunes of their country. There were enormous difficulties to contend with: the bankruptcy of their Treasury, the weakness of their police, the long tradition of corruption and blackmail, besides the continual plots and counter-revolutions from the friends and adherents of the deposed Shah. During the last four years, as Lord Curzon has said, "the Persian Government have had to create a parliament, to evolve a constitution, to suppress rebels, to depose a tyrant, and to expel him when he returned."

But a new national spirit had arisen. In spite of all the difficulties, the situation was steadily improving. Under the able direction of Mr. Shuster¹ and other foreign advisers whom, following the example of Japan, the Government had called in to assist them, a new administration was being established. Even the finances were recovering. As regards police, although there was still disorder and insecurity, it is a remarkable fact that during all the disturbances not a single European had been injured. With sufficient time and freedom from outside interference, there seemed nothing to prevent the Persian question being settled with the full consent of the Persian people in a permanent and satisfactory way.

Unfortunately these conditions were

¹ Mr. Morgan Shuster, an American citizen, appointed in May 1911 on the recommendation of the President of the U.S.A. to take charge of the finances as Treasurer-General.

not secured. For nearly three years past, from one cause or another, the Government had found itself in continual disagreement with its two powerful neighbors, and especially with the representatives of Russia. The more steadily it set itself to "internal reforms" the more dangerous the external situation grew.

On the 10th of November these difficulties came to a head. A dispute had occurred in consequence of an attempt to levy taxation on the property of the brother of the deposed Shah, a *protégé* of the Russian Government. I take from *The Times* of the 13th of November a description of what happened:

Teheran, Nov. 12th.

Russia has presented a Note renewing her demand for the withdrawal of the Treasury gendarmes from the property of Shua-es-Sultaneh and for an apology by the Foreign Minister at the Legation. The Note was accompanied by a verbal statement that unless immediate satisfaction were forthcoming diplomatic relations would be broken off, and Russia would take other measures. . . .

The whole Ministry has resigned and the Regent also. No Minister is likely to be found willing to go to the Legation and apologize. . . .

The action of St. Petersburg throughout causes unbounded surprise here.

In their extremity the Persian authorities applied to this country for advice; and on the 20th of November the Foreign Office telegraphed, advising them to yield unconditionally to both the Russian demands. They told them that if they did so the British Government "had every reason to believe" that the Russian troops, who had already entered or were entering Persia, would be withdrawn. The next day (the 21st of November) the Persian Government decided to act on this advice. Three days later (the 24th of November) they had actually complied with both demands.

Again I extract from the report of *The Times* correspondent an account of what happened:

Teheran, Nov. 24th.

Mr. Cairnes, Director of Taxation, last night withdrew Mr. Shuster's gendarmes and handed Shua-es-Sultaneh's property over. . . .

Simultaneously Vosak-ed-Dowleh went to the Russian Legation, speaking thus: "I come to apologize on behalf of the Persian Government for the unmannerliness of officials towards the Russian Consul-General on the property of Shua-es-Sultaneh. I am very sorry it has occurred," &c.

Sir George Barclay, the British Minister, assisted the reconciliation by convincing the Persians that the Russian troops would be withdrawn if an acceptable apology were tendered.

It might well have seemed—as it seemed, in fact, to *The Times* correspondent—that the "reconciliation" was complete. Russia had exacted the full measure of her demands. She had saved the property of her adherents. She had secured for herself an apology made in the most public way. What remained but to consider the incident closed and to see that the Russian troops were immediately withdrawn in accordance with the promises made?

But Russian honor was not so easily satisfied. Not only was it said that there had been undue delay in complying with her demands, but a fresh offence had been discovered. A letter had been written by Mr. Shuster to *The Times*, in which, in reply to some criticisms of that journal, he had reflected on the Governments both of Great Britain and Russia; and it was now alleged that a translation of this letter had been circulated as a pamphlet in Persia. Such an offence as that could not be overlooked.

On the 20th of November, within five days of the compliance with the first ultimatum, the Government of Russia had presented a second ultimatum,

adding, on this occasion, a fixed time limit. Three peremptory demands were made: (1) The instant dismissal of Mr. Shuster from the service of the Persian Government, (2) the right of veto for Russia and Great Britain on all future appointments of foreign advisers, and (3) the payment of an indemnity. An interval of forty-eight hours was allowed for compliance.

It was plain that no Government with a shred of independence or self-respect could have yielded to such demands, presented in such a way. But the Persian Government did not entirely refuse to consider them. They appealed once more to the good offices of Great Britain. They asked for a fair investigation of the whole matter. They stated they were quite willing to discuss the terms of the ultimatum if reasonable time were given.

To all such appeals the British Government were deaf. They had indeed already consented to the action that Russia was taking. The terms of the ultimatum had been formally submitted to them before it was presented to Persia, and except in two details they made no objection. With regard to the proposed indemnity, they pointed out that, as "Persia is very short of money," the exaction of any indemnity might be disadvantageous to other interests, and they expressed the hope that the Russian Government would "after the crisis is over find some way of avoiding this difficulty"; in other words, that they would take a "concession" instead of hard cash. They also trusted that the Russian Government would not add to the embarrassments of the situation by allowing the restoration of the deposed Shah. But that was all the protest that they made. With these two reservations the British Government became parties to the whole proceeding. The demands of Russia were to be met. Persia must be left to her fate. All the profes-

sions of four years ago—the desire to safeguard Persian independence, to give her a fair chance of reform—were utterly disregarded.

How seriously the part taken by the British Government in these events had affected the good name of our country at once became clear. From Egypt, from India, from Turkey, from all parts of the Moslem world messages of indignant protest were received. At Bombay a mass meeting "of the different Moslem communities" of that town passed a resolution calling attention to the "bond of Islamic brotherhood which unites the Moslems of this country with those of Persia," and begging the Foreign Office to use their influence in preserving Persian liberty.

Of course, there were the usual official assurances. Russia, we are told, had despatched her troops "owing to force of circumstances," and "without the least intention of violating the integrity or independence of Persia." So runs the semi-official statement from St. Petersburg, as quoted by the Foreign Office. "The last thing we wish to do," added Sir Edward Grey, "is to pursue, or be parties to a policy in the neighborhood of India that would be or have the appearance of being harsh and aggressive towards a Mohammedan country." But assurances of this kind are beginning to have a hollow sound. The examples of Morocco and of Tripoli are not so easily forgotten. Mohammedan countries cannot be blamed if they set rather small store on the assurances of Christian Powers.

Again it is said that it was all the fault of Mr. Shuster, and that it was only against him that the action of the two Powers was directed. But it is impossible to isolate Mr. Shuster in that way. Mr. Shuster was an official employed by the Persian Government, whom he had served with signal ability

and success. He is a man, as Lord Morley has said, "whose zeal, whose ability, and whose single-mindedness is beyond dispute," and he had won, in a manner which did credit to them no less than to him, the confidence of the Persian Parliament. In all this long and rather sordid business there is no brighter feature than the courage and the loyalty with which the Mejliss stood by Mr. Shuster.

And what, after all, were the charges against him? Lord Morley tells us that he "had shown want of tact," and that he had "ignored the position and indisputable claims of Persia's two great neighbors." Whatever may be the gravity of such charges, they are exceedingly general in scope; and it may well be asked what were the exact offences alleged against Mr. Shuster to justify the violence and the haste with which he is being expelled. Only two definite charges have yet been made: (1) That he wrote a letter to *The Times* defending his conduct, which *The Times* had attacked, and in turn attacking the Governments of Great Britain and Russia, and that he afterwards circulated this letter as a pamphlet in Persia; (2) that he appointed a British subject, Mr. Lecoffre, to a position in Northern Persia. With regard to the pamphlet he himself denies that he was in any way responsible for its circulation in Persia. With regard to the appointment of Mr. Lecoffre, it is noteworthy that Mr. Lecoffre had already for some years held office in Northern Persia. All that Mr. Shuster did was to transfer him from Teheran to Tabriz, and the appointment has since been cancelled. But, after all, the question was not whether Mr. Shuster conformed to the diplomatic standards of London or St. Petersburg, but whether, on the whole, he had served Persia well, or had committed any offences of so grave a character as to warrant his immediate ex-

pulsion. At present no such offences have even been alleged.

To demand the instant dismissal of an official who had the full confidence of his Government on charges so trivial as those made against Mr. Shuster, was to make a vital attack on Persia's liberty. To say that no successor should be appointed without the formal consent of the two Powers was to make it practically impossible under present conditions for the sovereignty of Persia to continue. By consenting to such demands the British Government have consented to the virtual destruction of an independence which they were pledged in honor to maintain.

As I write, the news comes that the Mejliss have at last given way, and accepted the three demands of the ultimatum. Deserted by their friends, denied even the right of inquiry, threatened by an immediate advance of Russian troops to overwhelm them, it may well have seemed to them that no other course was left. Mr. Shuster has been dismissed; the right of veto on future appointments is admitted—though we are told with some modifications; even the indemnity is to be paid, if not in cash, at any rate in concessions. The crisis of the second ultimatum has ended, as did the crisis of the first, in the exaction by Russia of the full measure of her demands.

But still the Russian troops will remain. The disturbances that have unfortunately occurred at Tabriz and Resht have given indeed exactly the justification that was necessary. Already we learn that fresh reinforcements are being sent; while the *Novoe Vremya* is demanding that Russia should "take justice" at these places "into her own hands," and that "the whole population of Tabriz should be held responsible and punished." Russian honor, it would seem, is not yet satisfied.

In the meanwhile what is to be the position of the Persian Government?

At the end of his recent speech in the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey gave a short but very important outline of the joint policy which he hoped that, when the crisis was over, Great Britain and Russia would pursue. A form of government was to be set up "that would not disregard the special interests of the two Powers." A successor to Mr. Shuster was to be found. A fresh loan was to be raised with a view to "a constructive policy." If Russian troops remained, it was to be only as a temporary arrangement. The Convention, in fact, was to be continued on a new basis; and so long as the present co-operation between the two Powers continues there seemed no reason why some such arrangements should not work—at any rate for a time. In spite of all that has been lost, they would preserve at least the semblance of Persian autonomy: something round which in happier days

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the national spirit might revive.

But if the most recent developments are any indication of Russian intentions towards Persia, it becomes doubtful if even this can be still secured, or if any co-operation with regard to Persia would continue possible. A situation might then arise in which nothing would be left for this country but to consent to the political partition of Persia, with all the dangers and strategical difficulties and the immense drain on Indian resources which that would involve. If this last and crowning blunder is to be avoided, the Government will have to take a firmer attitude than they have hitherto adopted. If Russian friendship is valuable to this country, the friendship of Great Britain is also of some value, if only for financial reasons, to the Russian Government. Let it be made clear that that friendship can only be retained if the principle on which the Convention was based is faithfully and loyally observed.

Philip Morrell.

MR. HENRY JAMES AND HIS PREFACES.

Few literary careers can compare with Mr. Henry James's in achievement. He has been publishing for almost half a century, his aims from the first have been distinctive and uninfluenced by any popular demand, he chose his own methods and brought them well-nigh to perfection. He is a theorist, and his theories have been enunciated in a long series of critical essays. But what amazes us is the consistency with which they have been illustrated in his work. It is this very coherence which makes his work in its totality so difficult to estimate. It is easy enough to point out certain of his books which we like or dislike, but the mass, the momentum almost, of the solid block he fills in our shelves

is hard to appraise. We gaze at the backs of Mr. James's volumes to feel them individually perhaps less vivid and significant than those of any equally great writer, but their weight, their space, the gap they make between our days and days the other side of them, that is immense. And lately he has increased our debt to him by a generosity new in its form. The essays, one of which precedes each volume of the tales in the New York Edition, enable the reader in a unique degree to compare an author's performance with his theory. A great artist puts himself before us, not as a magician producing mysterious, spontaneous results, but as a craftsman revealing the nature of his methods and

avowing his invariable habit of experimentation. It was twenty-seven years ago, when writing his *Art of Fiction*, in reply to Sir Walter Besant, that Mr. James first ran a tilt at the novelist's ordinary conventions and formulated his creed. "A novel," he said, "is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct, impression of life"; "the characters, the situations that strike one as real will be those that touch and interest one most"; "experience is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue"; "what is incident but the illustration of character? It is an incident for a woman to stand up with her hand resting on a table and look out at you in a certain way." In regard to these statements, and others like them scattered throughout Mr. James's critical essays, the prefaces find little to add or to alter.

But if on the level of the theorist the prefaces add very little, on a secondary plane they are altogether invaluable. They establish much that must otherwise have been only surmise; they give the conditions and places in which the novels were written, the nature and order in which themes suggested themselves. It has always been impossible to miss the fact that Mr. James's gifts had their root in "internationalism," yet only amid the circumstantial details now afforded us does the truth become fully apparent. To think of Mr. James's vision as a cosmopolitan product we do not, of course, need to be reminded of Mr. Beerbohm's delightful caricature. Mr. James exclaiming on revisiting America, "I might, in regarding and, as it somewhat were, over-seeing, à l'œil de voyageur, these dear good people find hard to swallow, or even to take by subconscious injection, the great idea that I am—oh! ever so indig-

enously—one of them." Paris, London, Rome, the subtlety and brilliancy of each capital, have heightened his power of refraction; but his lenses themselves remain more trans-Atlantic than many of his readers are apt to suppose. Never, perhaps, will there be a more satisfying presentation of the old country as seen through the eyes of the new, than was given in *A Passionate Pilgrim*. It is not the smallest of Mr. James's contributions to knowledge that he has revealed how much Europe stood in need of American eyes to intellectualize, if not actually discover, her beauties. London he has seen as no Englishman could have seen it, from the days when as a child in New York he pored over pictures in *Punch*, down to the time of the broad-washed, essential portrayal in which Kate Croy has her being. "There is an emotion," he tells us in writing of Hampton Court, "familiar to every intelligent traveller, in which the mind seems to swallow the sum total of its impressions at a gulp, to take in the whole place whatever it be." *A Passionate Pilgrim* appeared in 1871, *Roderick Hudson* in 1875, *The American* in 1877, *Daisy Miller* in 1878, *The Portrait of a Lady* in 1880, *The Reverberator* in 1888, and all these, with a score of shorter stories, presented American characters on a European background. So constant, in fact, up to about 1890, was Mr. James's attention to this theme that it has become customary to divide his work into two periods—the earlier portion respecting "the adventures of the rich Americans in our corrupt old Europe"; while the latter contains simply those works which have been published since 1892. To extol Mr. James's success in the earlier of these periods would be an impertinence. What he accomplished is without parallel; he invented a *genre* of his own.

Roderick Hudson was begun in Flor-

ence and finished in Boston, and "one fact about it," he tells us, "outlives all others; the fact that as the loved Italy was the scene of my fiction—so much more loved than one has been able after fifty efforts to say—and as having to leave it persisted as an inward ache, so there was soreness in still contriving, after a fashion, to hang about it, and in prolonging from month to month the illusion of the golden air." Is it not easy to see how well these conditions served for a tale in which Italy is, so to speak, the Eastern horizon, and hangs in luminous haze? And if in *A Passionate Pilgrim* he gives us the magic of place, scents and sounds, the feel of our hedgerows and pastures, the mild moist air and memories dense in the sod; in *Daisy Miller*, *The Reverberator*, and perhaps most of all in *The American*, he reveals a yet more rarefied fragrance. Francie's and Newman's spiritual clarity set against conventional "manners" is like a stream by a mirror. In the Preface which speaks of this time and these tales Mr. James tells us "the 'international' light lay thick on the general scheme of my observations, everything that possibly could be managed at that time to be international for me. Therefore, I may say that if no particular element or feature of that view had struck me from far back as receiving so much of the illumination as the comparative state of innocence of my country folk by that same token everything had a price, was of immediate application and found closely interwoven, that could tend to emphasize or vivify the innocence."¹ And, again, he writes in regard to the reprinting of *Lady Barbarina* (1884); *The Siege of London* (1882); *An International Episode* (1878): "The author of these volumes would seem struck with no possibility of contrast in the human lot so great as

that encountered as we turn back and forth between the distinctively American and the distinctively European outlook. He might even, perhaps, on such a showing be represented as scarce aware, before the human scene, of any other sharp antithesis at all."

Later, since 1890 or thereabouts, Mr. James has abandoned this specialized interest, this particular angle, for a cosmopolitan temper. He has shared, say his exponents, in a general European tendency towards the recondite rather than the rare, the kind of obscurity offered only by over-ripe civilizations. And here in this region of non-moral, at times almost pathological, interests, his genius has found its true scope. Whether this verdict is just, time only can tell. To find any of the myriad whisperings and beckonings which solicit our hyper-sensibility tabulated for us is a boon we may over-estimate easily. However that may be, I cannot but think that in the employment of his methods upon English themes Mr. James has exposed an essentially un-English mind. "*The Golden Bowl*," he tells us, "is not 'international,' the subject could have been perfectly expressed had all the persons concerned been only American, or only English, or only Roman." Now even to Mr. James's most unquestioning admirers this must come as a hard saying. If Maggie Verver is not to be seen as American, some of us will not be able to see her at all. She is lovely, with a loveliness no one may gainsay; but is she not what she is because she belongs with Newman and Francie? She is the rarest of the bunch, but she belongs to them, and it is that fact, surely, that gives us our grip of her. Manners and morals in her are the result of uniquely American conditions. The equivalently well-bred Englishwoman in similar circumstances would have been neither

¹ Preface to "*The Reverberator*, *The Passionate Pilgrim*," &c. &c. Vol XIII.

² Preface to Vol. XIV.

so lovely nor so unintuitive. European good breeding consists of personal simplicity made possible by what has come to be effortless responsiveness to complexities. Such simplicity as Maggie Verver's differs essentially from that of, say, a home-staying duchess. English readers are apt to lose sight of the difference, from their consciousness of the taste and wealth by which Maggie is surrounded. But, for good or for evil, these are no part of her; she is sprung neither of generations having them, nor of generations not having, and craving them. She is what she is because she has escaped the moulding of either initiation. The equivalent English-woman is, perhaps, more independent of the things themselves; but she is in no way independent of the processes they represent. Her great grandmother built certain conditions into life and her successor responds to them intuitively. Mr. James seems altogether to have missed a fact, which is really the central fact about an Englishman or Englishwoman of good breeding, that their past is actually made present, summed up, in a certain refusal to analyze. And what this failure of perception may amount to, *The Sacred Fount* and *The Siege of London* have exposed. Call us a nation of hypocrites if you like, but if you come to describe us you will be quickly aware that the whitening is part of our sepulchres. The separate constituents of *The Sacred Fount* may exist, but the totality of English country-house life it portrays is simply incredible. The atmosphere, the medium suggested could not exist for a day unless the house were given up to detectives. Conventions are, after all, Society's tribute to decency, and incidents such as those of *The Sacred Fount*, portrayed without their corresponding conventions, result merely in nightmare. The actions described may be those of Englishmen, but outside kitchens, through

the length and breadth of the land, no collection of men and women would be found to share in what are represented as their actor's habitual reflections upon them. Mr. James's scientific search for phenomena has led him astray. Interested only in discovery, in tracking down, he has missed truth that should have been perceived intuitively. He has analyzed individuals and placed them together without a co-ordinating atmosphere. And in England—in Europe—their atmosphere is so much more than themselves. This failure is most markedly present in certain scenes in *The Ambassadors*. Mr. James sets forth to satiety in the prefaces³ his theory that everything in the tale must be seen through the mind of some actor in the drama. Essentially this is, after all, Wilkie Collins's method, and, however widely different the material it is employed on, is likely to retain some of the dangers of the detective story—dangers which, where delicate themes are involved, wrest certain actors to "impossible" actions and speeches because such and such things must be brought into the story. But, however we should explain it, perhaps the most astounding example of unreality of situation, and character destroyed for want of its atmosphere, is to be found in *The Ambassadors*. All the growing discomfort the reader may have experienced as to Madame de Vionnet's not being a consistent really-drawn character comes to a climax in the incident of her call on Sarah Pocock. No woman of the world could have imposed that call. Considered on the lowest, the most obvious ground, it is not the way to propitiate the "Sarah Pococks" of life to cheapen oneself to them. Even if we suppose the call to be paid, Madame de Vionnet's talk is incredible. Surely it is diametrically opposed to all we have

³ Elaborated finally and completely in the Preface to "The Golden Bowl."

been told of her that she should again and again place Strether in predicaments which even Waymarsh perceives and struggles to rescue him from. Then the taste of her talk, her "Strethers," her chaffing about "dear old Maria," her insistence on her daughter's being permitted to see Mamma, her proprietorship of Chad—justifying Sarah's "I'm much obliged to you, I'm sure, for asking me to his rooms"—and, finally incredible, her inquiry of Sarah, "Do you know dear old Maria?" which compels Strether to turn to Sarah with "Your mother knows everything"—the author cannot really have attempted to imagine this scene. Exactly the same kind of failure of imagination is to be found in some of Maggie Verver's speeches, but here it is very much worse because there is no loophole for defence. Madame de Vionnet is supposed to stand for just the opposite of *naïveté*, for polished and perfected sophistication. There is no opening to argue, as it is just possible to do in Maggie's case, that a crystalline ultra-simplicity may be some part of the author's conception. Madame de Vionnet is pre-eminently a social being. Yet throughout this scene she ignores the primary law of society—mutuality of intercourse—the agreement that no individual shall make social advances, except on a common profession of feeling. The author's intention, of course, is that we shall think of Madame de Vionnet as suffering and distracted. But we are shown the condition of mind at the price of the crumbling of the character. Does not the difference between one social level and another lie just in the manner in which such nervousness betrays itself, the expression it takes? The nervousness of the woman who makes this *faux pas* would have introduced into her relations with Chad all the elements that our whole conception of Madame de Vionnet rests

upon her not introducing. Of Mr. James's heroine (who earlier in the book has been so alluringly, so consummately, ours also) in this chapter and others that follow, we find ourselves exclaiming in the author's words from elsewhere*: "On the basis of so great a weakness, where was your idea of the interest? On the basis of so great an interest, where was the provision for so much weakness?"

And if Mr. James fails in penetrating a certain temper of mind in European society—and how, after all, could it be otherwise when to the alien in him we owe so much in so many directions?—there is, I believe, an element of our life in regard to which his nationality operates even more deeply. In the Preface to Volume XVII. Mr. James tells us that he has placed together a group of his compositions concerning the side of life to which he has felt himself most susceptible. "The fairy tale side of life," he says, "has used for the tug at my sensibility a cord all its own. . . . The ghost story, as we may for convenience call it, has ever been for me the most possible form of the fairy tale." Now a number of the tales in this volume are among Mr. James's most outstanding successes. But these, such as *The Beast in the Jungle*, *Owen Wingrave*, and *The Birthplace*, are not really concerned with the "supernatural" at all. They are brilliant presentations of rare and delicate but "natural" psychological experiences. If this point needed proof it has surely been attested sufficiently by the degree in which perhaps the best of these tales, *Owen Wingrave*, was ruined in effect by its recent dramatization. It was by the strangest of ironies, surely, that an incident Mr. James had so consummately balanced upon the tight-rope between temperament and phenomena should have been

* Preface to Volume I. in regard to the character of Roderick Hudson.

reduced to the level of a stage "apparition." It had been part of the adroitness and perfect taste of the story that the catastrophe—confined to thirty lines in fifty pages—was only narrated through a third person, and could not be conceived of as having an eye-witness. In the tale, too, Owen Wingrave was justified in not fleeing from the haunted room at the last by the fact that his cousin had turned the key in the door. In the play, as given at the Little Theatre recently under the title of *The Saloon*, half the audience was left, at the fall of the curtain, in the belief that the sensitive and delicately-minded Owen had committed suicide in the presence of the girl he adored. And, for all its ugliness, this idea, after all, is not one atom more nonsensical than that he should have died from nervous terror while in her company. There was not the smallest need to determine in regard to the story whether the ghost was of an objective or a subjective kind, but it must have been obvious to every reader that it was of the kind that cannot appear when we are not alone.

In view of the very recent performance of *The Saloon* this digression, to speak of *Owen Wingrave*, has seemed pardonable. But the point we are really dealing with is that neither that tale nor the best-known tales in the volume are concerned with the supernatural. The first of those that are, and the first in the book, is *The Altar of the Dead*. And this is a story so finished and delicately adroit in all its secondary considerations—the level of ideas within the range of direct analysis where Mr. James's powers are unrivalled—that readers are apt to overlook the blind spot at its centre. Its skill is so great that they may well be decoyed: yet in regard to matters of taste a danger signal hangs out in the earliest pages, when Stransom, the hero of the tale, gazing in a jeweller's

window, sore for the forgotten and innumerable dead, is spoken of as "lingering long enough to suspend in a vision a string of pearls about the white neck of his own vanished love!" Intercepted in this occupation by an old friend, Creston, who is accompanied by his second wife, Stransom's nerves are immediately on edge for the first and deceased Mrs. Creston, a woman, who, in common with many of Mr. James's rarest relegated heroines, has died at child-birth. This final contact with the temporal drives Stransom back on a long latent thought. He enters "a high doorway." We are told "it was a temple of the old persuasion, and there had evidently been a function, perhaps a service for the dead; the high altar was still a blaze of candles." This means, we suppose, that it was a Roman Catholic Church and that a Mass had been sung, though it was afternoon. The moment, the author suggests, is for Stransom one of superlative insight: "more than it had ever yet come home to him it struck him as good there should be churches." He gazes at the lighted altar; he sets to work to name and group the candles after his departed friends. His feeling intensifies: "he almost caught himself wishing that certain of his friends would now die that he might establish with them, in this manner, a connection more charmingly." For whom? With Chapter Five, the tale, entering on the definitely restricted personal region, concerning only Stransom and the living woman who shares the altar he has bought, moves with admirable security. From here to the end it is singularly perfect. But, when we consider the theme that is chosen, is it not more than strange that this should be the only part that is spiritual? Presenting Stransom to us in churches and before altars, the author has given us no atmosphere. For artistic purposes, he might as well have been set in a par-

lor. That which to the most everyday minds a church in some degree stands for has been unfelt. In so far as the story is vital, it is concerned with the living and not, as its author means it to be and says that it is, with the dead. And our dissatisfaction, under this heading, must deepen immensely when we learn of the story's genesis—the funeral on its way to Kensal Green and Mr. James's friend who cried out "Mourir à Londres, c'est être bien mort." Mr. James thinks of himself as placing self-imposed limits on his use of the supernatural. But, as a matter of fact, does he share in susceptibility to "spiritual" atmospheres to the degree of an ordinary Englishman? Happily to most of us, however unorthodox, to buy up an altar would not be to "raise" or consecrate one, but to commit a sacrilege, to destroy a bridge with the unseen. Stransom's vision of purchasing the altar as a private preserve is no subtlety and illumination, but a blunted and inartistic idea. For normal minds, apart from and outside theologies, envisage a church as a community—a way of escape by communion. In thinking over these points we find our minds casting back to New England. From stock of the Pilgrim Fathers there rises, after two and a half centuries, a past-master of subtleties, but of subtleties only convincing considered apart from communities, restricted to individuals outside societies—the kind left to the Puritan when he broke with tradition and defied personal conscience. Centres of interest have shifted of course. The problems now offered us have respect rather to questions of taste than what our forefathers thought of as matters of conscience. But the dislocation—the segmentation—of vision is surely akin?

Among the most moving scenes in all fiction is that in which Milly Theale, mortally stricken but superb in her

beauty, is piloted by Lord Mark in the low afternoon sunlight past "patches of color," behind layer and layer of paintings, and curios, and tapestries, to discover her likeness in the Bronzino deep in the heart of the burnished old house: "She found herself for the first moment, looking at the portrait through tears. Perhaps it was her tears that made it just then so strange and fair—as wonderful as he had said; the face of a young woman all splendidly drawn, down to the hands, and splendidly dressed; a face almost livid in hue, yet handsome in sadness, and crowned with a mass of hair rolled back and high, that must, before fading with time, have had a family resemblance to her own. The lady in question, at all events, with her slightly Michaelangelesque squareness, her eyes of other days, her full lips, her long neck, her recorded jewels, her brocaded and wasted reds, was a very great personage—only unaccompanied by a joy. And she was dead, dead, dead! Milly recognized her exactly in words that had nothing to do with her. 'I shall never be better than this.'" Lord Mark does not understand—it is part of the rare weaving of this tapestry-like picture that the Englishman should offer perfected adroitness to mate with her feeling. He protects without understanding, and the two pass on through an assembly whose personages gaze "as if Milly had been the Bronzino and the Bronzino only Milly," and murmur, "'Superb.'" It would be absurd to pretend that Mr. James in his earlier writings gave us anything quite so rare—so dim and deep in color and texture—as this. It is the greatest scene in the whole of his work. Yet *The Wings of a Dove* has other pictures, in Venice, worthy at least of such company. And almost, if not quite, on a par with them is that cameo in *The Golden Bowl*; Charlotte acting as cicerone at Fawns

—the clear-lighted gallery, the gray-blue tones of the tapestry, the austere high voice which Maggie and Adam hear going on and on with its exposition from tension too great to allow it to stop or to quaver. Before passages such as these all criticism is silent, enthralled. In them, the deeper, the more turbid the stirring of human emotions, the better the "spider's web" catches its "particles" and sets them to gleam in its mesh.

But why, we presently find ourselves asking, are the parts so often greater than the whole, passages and incidents surpassingly thrilling with comparative flatness in the whole they should subserve? It is part of Mr. James's theory that no material is unworthy of treatment, and may be dignified by use. Speaking of his search for illustrations, he says: "Both our limits and the very extent of our occasion lay in the fact that, unlike wanton designers, we had not to create, but simply to recognize—recognize, that is, with the very last fineness."⁵ Such an attitude has obvious dangers. Phenomena in life are grouped about centres of feeling. Incidents lie scattered like beads, but ourselves are the string; and, strung on ourselves, they show larger and smaller. Shallows no doubt have their recondite qualities, but to chart these too intricately may be to fill up the space for the channels between them; and in reading Mr. James's later novels one cannot but be impressed by want of perspective. Every successive mood of his characters is moulded and crystallized into sharp and resonant images. These images have in themselves extraordinary beauty and appositeness, but the employment of them, normally, in transitional passages, puts the very great-

⁵ Preface to "The Golden Bowl."

⁶ These remarks do not apply to "The Outcry," but that, though published in book form, is not one of the novels; it is no longer than a good many of Mr. James's "short" stories.

est demands on the subject.⁶ A reviewer of Mr. James's last book has just said: "It shows again Mr. James's marvellous faculty for making people do blunt things with infinite finesse, and not very beautiful things beautifully. His world is his own, and he raises it to his own power." That is an admirable saying. It is possible, however, to endorse it with a qualification. Mr. James does indeed quicken "his world"—all the accoutrements, so to speak, of human existence—to an extraordinary poignancy. His intricate furnishings—the tapestries and paintings, dim deep old colors, curious outlines of features, thoughts about thought—lend their living completeness to characters which in themselves are incomplete, and we forget through what peep-holes and slits we look on to life.

The question about the later novels is not whether they are astoundingly brilliant—on that score there is no room for differing opinions—but whether their centres are living enough to carry the complexity their author lays on them. In this matter a comparison with Meredith might be instructive. In his essay on George Sand (1877), Mr. James wrote: "Something even better in a novelist (than idealism) is that tender appreciation of actuality which makes even the application of a single coat of rose-color seem a violence." Here, idea and epithet alike recall passages of Meredith. But iconoclast as Mr. Meredith was, and curiously lacking in part of Mr. James's equipment, "the rose-pink of sentiment" was in his creed eschewed for a fiction "fortified with philosophy." He was, of course, only too apt to detract from his work by a didactic element, lumps of unkindled philosophy, but none the less it was his poet's vision that gave the necessary impetus—the unifying passion in short—to his novels. Had that been less vital and

glowing the impedimenta of his tales must have submerged them. More even than Mr. Meredith, though in a much more sublimated fashion, Mr. James in his later novels "rubs all the old lamps—metaphor, simile, analysis"—to afford us "a glimpse of the fray."

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The method is heavily freighted. Have the stories sufficient human impulsion to carry it? Is their "stuff," "a soul's epic encounter between nature and circumstance"?—an *epic* encounter; that seems the test.

M. Sturge Gretton.

A LEADER.

SCENES OF REVOLUTIONARY LIFE IN RUSSIA.

I.

A long steady pull at the bell. Two women stood at the gateway of a massive, grim, uncanny looking building in a quiet side-street off the busy Liteinaya in the heart of St. Petersburg. It was a frosty, windy evening in December, and the snow that fell pricked the face sharply, like needles. The time was about nine—not a late hour for traffic in the Russian metropolis; but the street where the dreary building stood was deserted: no open shops, no passers by, no swiftly gliding sledges but the one standing in front of the silent house: it brought the two women and was ordered to wait for them.

The women at the gate seemed oblivious of the cold. One of them, short, stout, and elderly, wore an astrachan cap, and her abundant gray hair was a plaything for the wind and was dancing in the air. The other was a young girl of perhaps twenty. She looked slender even in her thick, gray fur jacket. Her thin face was pale in the frame of a white woollen hood. Both women carried large bundles, containing pillows and blankets, and parcels of different sizes besides—rather heavy things for women of the better class. But they were on an errand in which even those who have servants prefer not to be assisted by them. The place where they were seeking entrance was a prison, "The House of Preliminary Detention" as

its official name runs, and they had come to provide bedding for a young man who had been arrested and brought there. His name was Vladimir Almazoff, and the two at the gate were his mother, the widow of a lawyer, and his only sister Vera. Vladimir had been arrested in the house of a friend the evening before, but his family had not known it until late in the afternoon of this day. A young lady—a stranger to them who did not tell her name—had called and told them that he had been taken away by the police. The mother was so overwhelmed that she had not been able to ask what she must do to obtain communication with her son. But Vera seemed to have more control over her nerves in spite of her youth. She steadied herself and put the necessary questions to the stranger, who informed her where Vladimir must have been conducted, and said that his family might bring pillows and whatever he might need. Marya Petrovna Almazoff and Vera packed in bundles and parcels everything they could possibly think of in their trouble—and there they were at the prison gate with bundles of bedding, clothing and food.

The gate opened and the "dvornik" appeared—a creature of such extraordinary bulk, due to the amount of sheepskin he was wrapped in—that his head seemed quite small, in

Yard-porter.

spite of the high fur cap he wore. At the sight of the two well-dressed ladies his diminutive face beamed with obsequious smiles suggestive of long recollections of tips received and pleasant expectations of tips to come.

"We have come to inquire for a student . . ." began Marya Petrovna.

"You come in, Barinya." Don't stand in the cold," said the man, inviting them with the utmost kindness. "They will tell you everything in the office: staircase on your right at the bottom of the courtyard. Let me carry your bundles for you."

It seemed a relief to meet with a friendly welcome even from the inferior staff of the prison. Mother and daughter took courage. The man carried their bundles to the staircase and left them to find their further way by themselves as he had to attend to his duty at the gate. They followed his directions, went up to the first floor and in a few moments were standing in front of a locked grating guarded by an armed soldier on duty. Through the gate they could see the hall inside: it was a sort of narrow passage with a bench opposite the entrance. A gaoler who sat on the bench saw them, got up and came to the locked grating, a bundle of keys in his hand. He wore a uniform of dull green cloth, with dull brass buttons. He had an impassive, grayish face with coarse features, and he looked interrogative.

"Too late for visitors," he said. "Parcels not accepted after eight," he added with a glance at the numerous belongings of the two ladies.

"Call the officer on duty, please," said Vera in a commanding voice. She took the active part upon herself now, as she did not trust her mother's ability to talk sternly to the prison authorities. And she knew this to be the only way of getting the best of

Lady.

them. Mother would cry and they would get the best of her. Marya Petrovna submitted and stood at her daughter's side, shaking all over but trying hard not to show her nervous state.

The officer came—another man in dull green, with dull brass buttons, but with shoulder straps to show his superior rank. And his face instead of being gray had a reddish tint—due probably to alcoholic excesses; and his look was not impassive, but prone to become fierce—if not compelled to be obsequious and crawling. He gave orders to let in the two ladies, who were shown to the office—a bare room with a large table in the middle. They put on it all they had brought. The officer followed them and Vera asked whether her brother—she mentioned his name—had been actually brought to this prison.

"Yes," answered the officer, "we have here Vladimir Almazoff." He looked into a register to make sure. "23—Student of the University. He was brought last night and will be transferred to-morrow to the Cross prison."

"But he is innocent! You *must* release him at once!" exclaimed poor Marya Petrovna, losing all self-control when she heard this alarming news.

The officer did not even trouble to answer. Here, in this same, bare room, he had seen innumerable distressed women—mothers, wives, and sisters of the prisoners—and was used to their inopportune questions and demands. What had he to do with the innocence or guilt of the prisoners? This did not concern him in the least. His business was to shift them—to receive them when they were sent to him, to see that they were kept secure and to send them to other prisons, if ordered. The shifting went on and on to make room for fresh arrivals. This foolish woman ought to know it

—all these women who worried him with useless demands ought to know better. But somehow they didn't and would continue to bother him. Women are unbearable creatures—especially in prisons!

He was going to be rude this time and ask this woman to stop her wailing. But a glance at Vera changed his mind. She had removed her hood and the finely cut head appeared in a frame of fair hair dressed in a simple but very becoming way. Her gray eyes had a dominating yet soft expression and the whole of her appearance was a strange and fascinating mixture of sweet girlhood, strong will and high-mindedness. The officer softened under her glance, felt a strong impulse to give some proof of good breeding and tried to behave nicely.

"Will you please hand all this to my brother, to-night?" asked Vera in a resolute and matter of fact way which seemed not to admit of any denial.

"Well, yes. . . . It is against the rules, you know. . . . After eight there is no delivery, but considering. . . ."

He did not finish the sentence as in fact there was nothing to be considered except Vera's strange fascination and he could not of course confess that.

One of the warders called in by the officer unfastened the bundles and each item taken out was closely examined to prevent any written note from being slipped into the prisoner's hands as well as any instrument with which he could do himself harm—the gaolers took the greatest care of the prisoners in that respect.

Vera and her mother were going to leave after this had been done. They knew, of course, that they would not be allowed to see Vladimir this evening; permission to visit a prisoner had to be obtained from other authorities. The officer told them to whom they

must apply the next day for further information and to obtain a pass to Vladimir's new prison. Vera thanked him for his kindness and as he accompanied her and her mother to the grating at the entrance she said goodbye and shook hands with him—impelled by some instinct to do it. The officer seemed slightly surprised but very much pleased. She would probably have felt indignant if anybody had told her before that she would talk in a friendly way and even shake hands with an official of his kind, a member of the police. But theory is so different from real life, Vera saw what a humanizing effect her friendliness had on the man and she wanted him to think kindly of her. So many young and ardent lives depended on him just now—and her brother was one of them.

II.

On their way home in the sledge they could not talk freely because of the driver who could overhear them. You can never tell who these men are and whether they may not be likely to get you into trouble. And besides Marya Petrovna would not listen to reason just now. Her nerves had given way. To drive home and leave her only son, her Volodya in that gloomy house, was too much for her. She sobbed her heart out on their way home and the tears did her good. She grew calmer and when they reached home Vera got her to talk reasonably. They sat up till very late in Marya Petrovna's cosy bedroom and made plans to get Vladimir out of prison.

His arrest was such a blow to his mother. Of course she knew that her son was implicated in "illegal" work—but she thought it was the propaganda of socialism among the working people and concerned only the economic, not the political movement. He was—as far as she knew—a mild social demo-

crat, an "S.D." as the party was called. Marya Petrovna was a sensible, good-hearted woman and with all her love for her son she could not blame him for championing the rights of labor and advocating social equality. But she could not help feeling glad that he did not belong to the extreme revolutionary party and had not to expose his life at any moment. She still hoped to see him settled in life in a secure position. She was well off; her husband had died a few years before, having earned quite a fortune as one of the ablest lawyers in St. Petersburg and she had been able to bring up her children in the very best way, without regard to expense. As there was no chance of getting higher education in Russia—all the universities being shut—she would have liked Vladimir to go abroad to one of the continental universities, and she would gladly have joined him with Vera and have been away from the turmoil. But of course Vladimir would not even listen to his mother's selfish plans. He belonged to his country, body and soul, and meant to give his life, if needed, in the fight for the freedom of Russia and its millions of suffering people.

However, of late he seemed to his mother somehow less devoted to revolutionary interests than he used to be. He avoided all discussions on political subjects with her, or with friends who came to their house. He seemed absorbed by something different and his mother was glad to notice it.

In the autumn of 1905, at the beginning of the new constitutional era in Russia, there was just for a short time a lull in the revolutionary movement. No conspiracies were needed any more, since people were allowed—or had been promised—permission to express and expound their principles quite freely. But the illusion did not last long. Another month passed and

all the prisons were filled again—and the stern "avengers" resumed their relentless work. The revolutionary party formed out of its midst a powerful organization, "the fighting staff"—and their special work was to "execute the executioners."

About a week before, a new act of the "fighting staff" had stirred the whole of St. Petersburg by its boldness and skill. They had succeeded in "executing" General Stepanoff, the governor of a remote province, a man who had acquired widespread fame by the atrocities he had perpetrated on innocent people. The general came to St. Petersburg to report on his "useful activities" and to take a short rest after his exhausting work. Watching closely his whereabouts the revolutionaries had got wind of his being in love with a French singer, a "star" in one of the music halls on the Nevaisles. He arranged supper parties for her and seemed to be very much taken by her charms. So one morning a man came to the general's hotel with an important message from Mademoiselle Marguerite. The general forgot all his habits of extreme caution and asked the man to come to his rooms—he was eager to hear from his fair friend. Left alone with the general, the man fired at him and killed him on the spot. As the general's rooms were in a separate wing of the hotel nobody heard what happened there and the "executioner" could quietly walk out of the hotel unnoticed. Hours passed before the murder was discovered and now the police were all astir hunting after the murderer.

Marya Petrovna was sure that Vladimir's arrest was due to the over-vigilance of the police. She knew that her son was now out of touch with the revolutionaries. He had, as he told her, some scientific work on hand, and spent nearly all his time away

from home in a chemical laboratory. Very often he would not even come home to sleep, but stayed with a friend who lived close to the laboratory. It was at that friend's house that he had been found by the police last evening. Of course it must have been some mistake, or, even if there were something against him, Marya Petrovna did not think it could prove serious. But she was in great anxiety all the same, knowing how long they keep people in prison even on slight suspicion.

Vera was not so confident as to her brother's perfect innocence. She knew that the laboratory work was a pretext to stay away from home without keeping their mother in a continual state of anxiety. She knew that Vladimir, far from having given up his revolutionary work, was devoting himself entirely to it. He had become one of the most active members of his party. Vera had been to one of the "mass meetings" in a factory where Vladimir spoke to a crowd of hundreds of workers. It was a dangerous thing for her to do as only the factory workers, men and women, were allowed to attend these meetings, and any outsider, if noticed by the overseers, would be given up to the police. She had to dress like a factory girl—but she was glad she had done it and gone to the meeting. She had not realized Vladimir's force before she heard him addressing the crowd of working people. He never argued with them on political questions, as some of the people's "instructors" would do, but exposed a clear and logical plan of action, doing it with such directness of purpose, such concentrated self-possession that in spite of his perfect simplicity he seemed a commander among equals, a man to be obeyed at a wave of his hand. The drift of his speeches was generally this: "You are awake at last, comrades," he said. "Your eyes are open, you know what the

rights of labor are. Take your cause into your own hands. We stand by your side, but don't depend on anybody's help. Be a strongly organized body of able men and know exactly what you are at. Don't flinch an inch from your duty and remember your rights. The victory will be yours—if you act as you ought to do." And then he would go on with practical programmes of revolutionary work. This sensible way of appealing to their self-confidence, of stimulating their initiative and their energy made a deep impression on the audience and the workers preferred Vladimir's downright and vigorous appeals to the display of more elaborate eloquence of many other young enthusiasts who preceded and followed him. They crowded around him after his speech, asking him questions and seeking advice in all sorts of difficulties.

The way he answered them and briefly settled all their perplexities was very significant. He was used to ruling—but in a very uncommon way. He was a leader—but in the peculiar Russian sense. A leader in England is the man who stands in the front, the conspicuous head of a movement, the one who wins the applause. The leader in revolutionary Russia is the man behind the scenes, the one who pulls the strings in darkness and whose deeds are recorded when they are over, when he has completed his life-work, has perhaps passed long years in confinement, or is dead. Vladimir Almazoff was one of these leaders and he proved it by arousing the free spirit of activity in all those who followed him.

This was the conspicuous part of his work—the one Vera could watch and for which she greatly admired him. But there was secret work behind—she knew it. They agreed that she should keep out of it. She was to remain at her mother's side whatever might hap-

pen to Vladimir, and it was safer not to know anything about her brother's dangerous secrets than to know and to hide what she knew. This was the agreement between brother and sister and she never asked him questions. And of late she had not even had a chance to ask. She had seen so little of Vladimir—he seldom appeared at home and when he came he remained an hour or so to see their mother and to ask her how she was. And this last week he had not come at all. He sent them a letter to say that he was very busy with his scientific work and could not spare time for a visit home. So she was left to her own thoughts and could but guess what he was doing now. She was very uneasy but did her best to conceal it from her mother. This night after having retired to her room she could not get any sleep at all. A frightful suspicion arose in her mind.

III.

"Verotchka, dear, come! Boris Samoiloff has come and wants to see you."

It was about ten in the morning. Vera was in her room dressing and getting ready for the day's work that she and her mother had before them. She was so absorbed in her uneasy thoughts that she did not hear the front door bell. She finished dressing in a few moments and joined her mother and the visitor in the drawing room. Boris stood at the fireplace, warming his hands. He turned round to Vera and shook hands with her. He was a youth of about twenty years, with a pale, longish, thin face, dark eyes and a thin black moustache. His straight, very dark hair, fell on his forehead and he shook his head now and then to throw it back. He was tall and very slim. There was nothing boyish left in the stern expression of his sharp features. He did not convey an impression of intellectual

force but could be credited with strong will and perseverance. This was the typical soldier of the revolutionary army, one of hundreds. He could be trusted with any commission—he would not flinch.

"Fancy, Verotchka, Boris Petrovitch was present at Volodya's arrest!" Marya Petrovna's voice quivered as she communicated the exciting news to her daughter.

"He will tell us all about it."

"It was such a shame!" said Boris, and his eyes looked fierce with indignation. "We were a most innocent party at the Andreyeffs last Wednesday—their 'At Home' day—discussing literature. Most of the guests were literary people, artists and the like. Hardly any students—in fact only Vladimir and I. I cannot imagine what the police were at—some false report must have been at the bottom of it. But there they were—about eleven o'clock—a numerous body of the police staff enforced by perhaps ten armed soldiers. The head of the invaders, a colonel of the gendarmes, rushed into the dining room and before anyone could utter a word cried in a stentorian voice: 'Nobody moves!' Imagine our consternation. The police probably expected to find a revolutionary committee, to meet with armed resistance and came in sufficient numbers for a fight. But even when their blunder became quite evident they went on behaving as if we were the most dangerous revolutionaries in the world. That's the revolting part of it! Their impudence becomes worse and worse since we have been 'given a constitution.' They used to be secret, to come to the house of each 'suspected' person separately in the depth of the night—they were ashamed of themselves. And now to dare to make such an attack! You should have seen how they behaved! Just like in a beleaguered city; soldiers posted on guard

in all the rooms, all the people present carefully searched, ladies as well as men, their names and addresses taken and nobody allowed to move before they had done and had searched the whole flat. I hear various things are missing from the house since that search—some valuable ones among them. They kept us till five in the morning. Of course we could put up with an unpleasant incident—it's not the first time—but then came the worst. They took Vladimir to police headquarters, having found a revolver in his pocket and some manifestoes issued by revolutionary committees. We thought they would release him after a while, but probably the secret police had some information about him—reports from detectives of course—and the next morning, when I came to inquire I was told he was being transferred to the prison for preliminary detention."

"Oh dear!" moaned Marya Petrovna, "when will he be out of prison? But they cannot keep him long since he has not taken part in the active work, can they?"

"Has not taken part in the active work? What do you mean?" asked Boris, evidently surprised. But he abstained from further explanations.

"Well, of course," he said, "you need not worry. It will turn out all right. But now, my dear Marya Petrovna," he added, "be an angel and let me have some tea. I have not had breakfast yet, I was in such a hurry. I was afraid you would have gone out already."

"Oh, I am sorry. I will go and get you something to eat at once."

Boris waited till she was gone, and approached Vera.

"Do you know that your mother is quite mistaken about Vladimir," he asked in a low voice.

"I know," she answered, and her

heart fell. She knew distressing news would follow.

"The arrest at the Andreyeffs was of course an accident. If only they don't find out! But of course they won't!" added Boris, with a confident toss of the head. "Now there is more I have to say to you. How far are you initiated?" he asked in a business-like tone.

"I know only what is necessary for immediate purposes. That was what we agreed, Vladimir and I. Just now I don't know any facts—I only guess."

"But you must know that Vladimir is on the C.C. (Central Committee)?"

"I didn't."

Vera was overwhelmed. The C.C. was a powerful revolutionary body the one that had organized the strikes and mutinies all over the country. The names of the members were kept in great secrecy, but it was pretty well known that they belonged to all classes and that even in fashionable society you may unwittingly meet a member of the C.C. Their work was important but their responsibility was frightful in every respect and Vera could not help being alarmed by Boris's news.

"Now you must know about it," proceeded Boris in the same serious matter-of-fact tone. "He was 'on duty' and had to do what he was expected to. We need your help."

"I don't belong to the party."

"That's exactly why you can be useful now. We want an outsider—a member of Vladimir's family. Listen. A very important strike is being arranged. The men of the Platonoff's cotton mill are ready to move—it has been all Vladimir's doing. But it is not only a strike, giving up work until their demands are granted. They are determined to fight, if they are turned out, to take hold of the works and to show how they themselves would manage it. If only they could hold their ground for a few days be-

fore being dispersed by military force, it would be an unheard-of victory. Its moral effect would be greater than the naval republic on the 'Potemkin.' They would give an object-lesson of sense and fair labor to the capitalistic world."

Boris was carried away by his enthusiasm, and Vera had to bring him back to realities.

"The men are ready," he continued, "but they must be provided with arms. Vladimir has succeeded in securing a cargo of guns from Finland—and now he has to decide whether the right moment has come, whether the strike can begin, how this supply of arms can be got hold of. We must be careful of spies for traitors are everywhere—Vladimir is the only man who has all the strings in his hands. The workmen know only their individual rôles—and without his orders nothing can be done."

"Then you must postpone the strike till he is released."

"That is out of the question. The plot is ripe and must be carried out now, or it will go to pieces."

"I don't see what else could be done."

"Vladimir must be at the head and give the necessary directions."

"From his prison?"

"Exactly. And there comes in your part. You will obtain a pass to visit him—and he will send us messages through you."

"But how?" Vera began to feel very nervous. This stubborn youth had no consideration for possibilities. "You know, even better than I do," she said in a slightly irritated tone, "that they don't allow one to talk to the prisoners about anything except family interests."

"Talk about family interests—that will do just as well as anything. Consult Vladimir about—let us say—a marriage that is going to be arranged.

He will know at once. I leave it to you to invent any story you like. But remember what we want to know: whether the plot is to be carried out, whether the guns have arrived, and who is entrusted to deliver them to the strikers. And another thing that is very important—he must write a manifesto to the strikers and let us have it."

"You don't mean he could do that in the prison?"

"He will. Act on these directions. And now hush! There is Marya Petrovna coming back."

Vera had not time to utter any objections. Her mother came to call Boris to the dining room for his breakfast and very soon after that he left. Before going he asked Vera to come next evening to the "Russian Theatre." He would like her to see the new play they were producing there. Vera understood that this was a business appointment. She was to deliver there Vladimir's answer, as Boris probably did not consider it safe to call too often at their house. She said she would come, but was quite at a loss how to carry out the plan entrusted to her.

And then there was something else, something else even more important she had wanted to ask Boris. It was in her mind the whole time, but she had not had the strength to utter her question. And besides, Boris might not know anything about it. Soldiers know but part of their leader's secrets, just what concerns them and their work.

Vera and her mother had to go first to the headquarters of the *gendarmes*. It was a long way from the place where they lived—an hour's drive. And it proved altogether useless to go there. They were politely turned out. "The *régime* has changed," explained the officer on duty with a malicious smile. "Political offenders are no longer under our care. The constitu-

tional government hands them to the law courts. They are all to be tried according to the law. Allow me to hope that in your case it may be more satisfactory than the administrative rule. Sometimes it is not."

They went away with a heavy heart—law suits are apt to drag. Poor Volodya! Without losing time they betook themselves to the law court and were shown into the office of the investigating magistrate.

The waiting-room was full of people one would not have expected to meet there. Hardly any ordinary petitioners—nearly all were well-known journalists, writers, editors. Vera met with an acquaintance—a young man with a keen, intellectual face. He looked very much amused.

"What are *you* doing here?" asked Vera. "I should not have connected you with law suits. Have you been left money?"

"I don't look like it, do I?" answered the young man, pointing to his rather shabby attire. "But you forget that I edit a comic paper. My wit does not seem harmless enough to the authorities. In the last number we had some funny trifles: telegraphic messages exchanged between St. Petersburg and Denmark, the picture of a man—one could see nothing but his feet in military high boots—hurrying into a starting train; the legend 'going off,' and such-like—quite harmless! But we are given a constitution and liberty of the Press. Preliminary censure is abolished; we are subjected to a Press law instead. And here I am summoned by the judge, accused of a State offence, and liable to I don't know how many months of prison. Long live the Russian freedom of the Press!"

He did not seem to mind the prospect of prison much; he was young, glad to have expressed his protest even at such a price, and confident in the victory of real freedom which would

put an end to these sham constitutional rights.

"I say, there is poor Fedya!" he exclaimed, and, leaving Vera, went to the door to greet a friend who had just made his appearance—another editor whose paper was stopped and who was summoned to the law court.

The turn of Vera and her mother came, and they were called to the magistrate's study. He invited them to take seats, and asked politely what he could do for them. He was young and probably very ambitious. His new appointment to deal with political offences—those of the Press included seemed to him a stroke of good luck. Quite an obscure official till then, he had now come into prominence; his name was often mentioned in the papers—with what comments did not matter to him. He believed himself on the way to a brilliant career, and was exultant. He meant, of course, to side with the authorities and to give his conclusions according to instructions from "higher up." But he tried in the meantime to gain the sympathy of the intellectual people with whom he had to deal now. He seemed so kind, so sympathetic, so sincere—and so talkative! He could not help showing off his importance.

"Almazoff?" he repeated the name Marya Petrovna told him. "Oh, yes, I know; the young Socialist, arrested accidentally. He is accused of making propaganda among the workers."

"But he is not guilty," began Marya Petrovna. "It is all a false report."

"We will see," interrupted the magistrate. "You need not be uneasy. Your son's cause is one of many. Nothing serious, I daresay. But you must give me time. I am just now so very busy with more important matters. All the Press people. So many things weighing on my shoulders." He could not resist the temptation to boast in the presence of the lovely young girl.

"But I will see to your son's case as soon as possible, I promise you. Don't be uneasy, but give me time. Just now I cannot examine his case. I am busy over the Stepanoff murder. Such a complicated affair. I seem to have a clue."

Vera was looking now into his face, and this increased his loquacity. He went on discussing the Stepanoff case. Why not have a chat with a charming young lady and her sympathetic mother? And the more he spoke, the

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more Vera saw that he practically had no clue whatever. And now her conviction was complete. She knew—what she hoped nobody else would know.

The only practical result of the visit was the pass for Vera and her mother to visit the Cross prison. Vera persuaded her mother to let her go first, and the next day, about twelve, she started to the Cross prison, situated far from the centre of the town, on the lower embankment of the Neva.

(To be concluded.)

A DINNER PARTY.

Now that one has become a mere participant in the well-ordered feast, both the dinner itself and the occasion which it represents have lost much of their original flavor. The former should, of course, to be fully enjoyed, be stolen in small quantities from the pantry, and consumed in a dark, remote spare bedroom; the latter should be viewed in fragments surreptitiously from an ambush.

I can remember hardly any event which threw the nursery into so high a state of excitement as an impending "dinner party." For this strange function, whose real intention was wrapped in obscurity, laid a potent spell upon the house, turning it into a home of pure romance, giving a wholly new aspect to familiar things, subtly affecting the behavior of familiar persons. From the very moment when the iron handle was brought forth from the back of the sideboard, and at its magic touch the dining-room table split across the centre and expanded irresistibly along the carpet with a yawning chasm growing by inches in its interior, and was thereafter fitted with

"leaves" to make good the discrepancy, so that at last it assumed splendid and over-powering proportions; till the moment when one had been finally captured for bed, and had nothing left to hope for, except to try to keep awake to listen for departing carriages, the afternoon and evening resolved themselves into one long adventure.

The development of the dining-room table alone from the humble board at which we had lunched into a glittering prodigy that filled the whole room was in itself a process well worth watching. Its final equipment was so lavish, so far beyond the needs of the case, so fantastic and unreal that one could but marvel at it as one of the most astonishing revelations of the mind of the Grown-up. The number of knives and forks alone, if one took the trouble to count them, was cause for laughter, but the glasses were simply bewildering, suggesting as they did a degree of excessive and discriminating thirst which one had not regarded as possible. The only innovation with which one could generously sympathize was the treatment of the table napkins. In

these upstanding and contorted forms—each bearing a small roll of bread within its snow-white heart—one could almost trace the hand of genius. That was a feat to be practised with clean pocket-handkerchiefs for days to come.

Of course it was well understood, as it had been vigorously laid down, that our sole duty on such an occasion as this was to "keep out of the way." But to obey the injunction literally was more than flesh and blood could be expected to stand. It was really very little use trying to get into the kitchen—an alluring scene of distracted effort, where all manner of miracles were being hourly performed—but one could always climb down the dank little enclosure outside and enjoy the prospect from the windows, slowly mastering by observation the principal items of the bill of fare. As a matter of fact, one was pretty well posted as to the progress of the campaign, and if there had been any question of the fish arriving late, or any doubt at all as to the successful outcome of the savory, the company at nursery tea had discussed the crisis with sympathetic interest. Nursery tea was apt to be inadequate on these occasions, but we made no complaint on that score. Well we knew—who better?—the strain that had been thrown on the administration.

The next glorious event of the evening was the appearance of Old John Gardener. That was one of the finest examples of the faculty of the party for turning all things topsy-turvy. For John—it was obvious to the meanest intelligence—looked hopelessly out of place in the house, though we were all agreed that he was exceedingly handsome in his black suit. For a long time we believed that he was regularly called in when the climax arrived as a sort of dictator to take over the complete direction of the affair—a position quite admirably in accordance with his talents, and it was with something of

disappointment that we discovered later that his was the humbler office of assisting with the carving and carrying the heavy dishes up the kitchen stairs.

Before we come to the active period of skirmishing which filled the evening I would point out that much depended on the waitress of the moment. There were several of these in our day, but they all fell into one of two classes; those who said they would bring you something afterwards if you would go away now and be good, and those who gave you something at once as the price of your going away.

The Arrival was witnessed, of course, from a safe ambush. The favorite spot was the curtain at the head of the stairs which commanded the hall, but it only accommodated two. Others must be content with the top of the long linen-press in the lobby or the chink of a half-closed door. When every new-comer was safely stowed in the drawing-room we would come out and compare notes, ready to seek cover again at the next ring of the bell. But we were always in our places when dinner was announced, lying flat upon the upper landing and peering through the banisters, enjoying a magnificent view of the short procession as it turned into the dining-room. After that there was a pause for awhile. One's sisters probably detached themselves from the main party, and stole into the bedroom behind us with a view to examining from a safe distance, and not without a certain awe, the cloaks of the visiting ladies laid out upon the bed. It seemed silly, but girls were like that. In the meantime there was not much to be done, for no one is interested in soup, and the occasion was, therefore, a good one to go down to the dining-room door and "listen to the buzz." There we would stand whispering for a time while feverish servants passed to and fro. And certainly there was nothing more mysterious or

memorable in the whole evening's entertainment than this strange penetrating buzz of conversation which rose almost to a scream whenever the door was opened. That they were all talking at once at the top of their voices was, of course, obvious, though one could never distinguish the words. But what were they talking about? And why in the world did they do it? This was no ordinary conversation. It was a clamor. And yet one must suppose they were eating all the time.

After that one would always pay a visit to the deserted drawing-room where the fire burned brightly and the lights were low. It gave one some sort of curious satisfaction to occupy the very ground of this fantastic drama, between scenes, and to discuss the gay hest that would so soon return to it. But we must be up and doing, for a scout has reported that the joint has already descended to the kitchen, and the moment for active pillage has arrived. From our base upon the upper landing a series of raids would then be made, and woe to the dish which, having served its purpose in the dining-room, was left unguarded in an empty pantry! One after another we tried our luck with varying success,

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making merry picnic with the spoils. As time went on, the sport became more and more exciting, for we had two forces to contend with. On the one hand Old John Gardener, now relieved from his more pressing duties, would take it upon himself to guard the stairs, and an attack could only be made at a moment when he had been called away. On the other hand we were already being captured ourselves, everyone in his turn, for bed, and the company diminished fast as one reluctant victim after another was borne off to the night nursery. There was still, of course, the possibility of a daring descent in one's night-shirt, but by that time there was an added risk. For at any moment the ladies might emerge into the hall.

Even when one had settled down for the night there was always a remote chance that an ally in the kitchen would send up some final fragment of dessert. But it was not likely. One must resign oneself to listening to the faint strains of music from below, and pondering upon the central problem which never grew stale—of why they did this sort of thing, and if they really had enjoyed themselves.

Bertram Smith.

THE POOR MAN'S VOICE.

A hundred years ago the voice of the laboring man was heard only through the somewhat equivocal medium of such philanthropists as Hannah More. Will Chip expounded his simple views on public polity, and allowed "the likes o' they" to inculcate upon him *ad libitum* the virtues of contentment, frugality, total abstinence, humility, hatred of the French, reverence for clergy and constitution, and implicit trust in God and the Gentry. Since then there have been many sincerer—or at any rate bet-

ter based—attempts to fathom the real sentiments of the poor. During the hungry forties, Disraeli and Charles Kingsley both wrote of the poor as a nation apart, a nation which suffered intolerable wrong at the hands of men in white waistcoats, and as a nation which hated its complement of the rich. Half-way between "Sybil" and "Alton Locke" came "Mary Barton," one of the greatest novels of compassion for the poor which our country has produced: the conception of John

Barton, with his hatred and contempt for the rich, came as a great shock to the Manchester school, who could find no place for the poor in their philosophy save under the euphemisms of labor and supply. It ranks its author with Goldsmith, Hood, Dickens, Erckmann-Chatrian, Mark Rutherford, as one of the truest and most pathetic protectors the poor have ever had. But these were all voices for the poor, not voices from the poor: since then we have got very much closer to the mind and the real feelings of the poor themselves. We have had writers such as Miss Loane, who have lived intimately with the poor, and given us not merely their ideals but their whole point of view; we have had interpreters as sympathetic and as sensitive as Mr. George Bourne; we have had reflectors as humorous and observant as Mr. Pett Ridge, Mr. Neil Lyons, the Teniers of the coffee-stall, and Mr. Robert Halifax—inde-fatigable photographer of the mean streets of Hoxton and Stepney. Many of the poor themselves have become articulate and even eloquent, and people have read for the first time true autobiographies of Bath chairmen, stone-masons, bluejackets, common seamen, and at least one inimitable super-tramp. Edlie Ochiltree and the leech-gatherer were splendid in their way as depicted by Scott and Wordsworth, but it is a new literary sensation to have their own philosophy of life set out, not by literary interpreters, however philosophical and discerning, but by the practitioners themselves. Broken men have now unbosomed themselves; the very tradesmen have confessed. And the possibilities of this kind of literature have not yet, it seems, by any means been exhausted. Mr. Stephen Reynolds is the pioneer in a literary experiment which, so far as I know, is completely novel and entirely modern. We have, of course, had amateur casuals, amateur

tramps, and amateur peasants; but a man who serves as a volunteer for ten years in such a calling as that of a longshore fisherman can no longer be fairly termed an amateur. Nothing is easier, of course, than to become a poor man by choice, but very few of us do. Mr. Reynolds has become seriously adopted in a poor man's family, he has of his own choice become a partner of two Sldmouth boat-men; turn and turn about with them, he waits on the beach, watches the weather, "digs" for herrings, and takes Cockney passages out for a row or a sail for shillings. He has already told us what the life was like in two noteworthy volumes—"A Poor Man's House" and "Along Shore"; now he tells us how we look from the point of view of a fisherman's window-pane. Some of us imagine that we believe in the qualities of the people, but this flattering unction is not, it seems, to be reciprocated: the working men, it appears, are much less interested in their betters than these last are disposed to imagine, and they have very little confidence in their good qualities at all. To convince the reader that he is writing for a fraternity of poor men and not for himself alone, Mr. Reynolds brings the confirmatory evidence of two collaborators, Bob and Tom Woolley. The bond of labor has made this triumvirate think as one man, in a freemasonry which permits Mr. Reynolds's superior education to be forgiven if not forgotten.

He's like a fellow's self—They've a-cowed him down, too. He knows what 'tis like. He've a-know'd what 'tis to go short. He's been through the hoop!—that is introduction enough, no matter where the man comes from; you may speak before him as you never would before a "gen'leman": you may count on his sympathy against "the likes o' they."

The chief enemies of the poor man, according to Mr. Reynolds, are the emis-

saries of our old friend the man in the white waistcoat, inspectors of every hue, the perlice, penny snatchers, (*i.e.* cheap insurance agents), and humanitarian reformers. He has a particular disaffection, it seems, for the "barons of the children's charter." Respect the ideals of the poor if you can, he entreats again and again, but better be doing anything than stepping down among the poor to preach middle-class propaganda; better far is it for them to rub along in their own way than to have their lives improved by humanitarian people who don't know their difficulties. The ideals of the middle class, such as the simple life, more votes, teetotalism, and cheap divorce, seem absolute nonsense to them.

These poor workers, we learn, and learn to believe, don't want most of the social reforms that are coming their way, whether through statutes or subsidized societies. Still less do they want reforms filtered through the minds of people who do not understand their needs, their habits, or their feelings. All the gifts of the parties—"A plague on them both," cry these working men—are poisoned by this blasting ignorance. Political opinion, not party opinion, is the desideratum of the working man, and the chief obstacle to his getting it is the cheap party press. He is still dazed and bamboozled by this as by some horrible cheap drug, but as with football so with politics, the greater part of the players have become lookers-on, willing to cheer or laugh, but not to exert themselves. The most important part of practical politics, Mr. Reynolds thinks, is mud-splashing. It is fun to see the mud flying and the players squishing and ducking, the suffragettes among them, for "they have taken to it admirably." Why they should want the vote at this juncture in the history of representative credit is about as incomprehensible to the working man as

would be an electoral campaign of cats to demand an equal consumption of dog biscuits. The mother type, after all, is the normal. "We would allow abnormal types their fling in every way possible; but we would not alter the Constitution to suit them." Changes are dangerous, nay terrible things. "People whose weekly income barely feeds and houses cannot afford to experiment in changes."

Mr. Reynolds's views on the drink question are views familiar to readers of *The Eye-Witness*; we need not repeat them here. But his remarks on the aloofness of the poor from the question of divorce are not only excellent and entertaining, but are valuable as giving us a measure of the book's genuine independence of view:

For the majority of working people divorce no more exists as a way out of matrimonial difficulties than champagne as a morning pick-me-up, or private motor-cars for Sunday outings. It is not borne in mind as a possibility, let alone not within their means. By many of them, indeed, it is looked upon as a vice for the wealthy, more scandalous than adultery, very much worse than simple immorality on the part of the unmarried. To be divorced is to be found out, whereas otherwise, with good luck and good management, all the moralities can be flouted with impunity; and it is one of the strongest arguments against State interference in private morality, that detection and punishment, like many children or none, is so much a matter of chance; that the more innocent stand to be found out first and made to suffer most. In a case of unhappy marriage where a district visitor, say, would freely recommend divorce, or at least separation, the neighbors would probably be of the opinion: "They're married and they must make the best of it. 'Tisn't nobody's fault but their own. I reckon one's just so much to blame as t'other, if all the facts was know'd." The legal assumption that one party to a divorce

suit is innocent and injured, and the other altogether in the wrong, would find little support among the poor. . . . " 'Tis like this in married life, I tell 'ee: one says something, heedless like, and t'other says something in return; and it all mounts up. Then one lets fly, and t'other lets fly, and all the time they'd give anything to stop it, only they can't. 'Twould puzzle God Almighty Hissself to find out which is worst. Mostly you jogs along happy enough in married life, so long as you got something to eat and a bed to lie on; but if 'twasn't for the children, and keeping a home together, and a fellow wanting a woman and a woman wanting a chap, and a husband and a wife being most handy to each other. . . . Aye, 'tis a chancy turn-out, and you can't rightly judge nobody, what their feelings is."

That is the sort of talk which goes on around unhappy households in a working-class neighborhood. In detail it is often unkind, sometimes ill-natured. But in the mass, in total effect, it is extremely tolerant. And it does not blink essential physical facts.¹

The Eye-Witness.

Mr. Reynolds seems at times as if he were trying deliberately to be a little bit defiant, but he stirs in us no resentment, none whatever. He delineates truly, he enables us to see that impulsive goodness of heart in the poor which goes beyond all the calculations of the rich, and explains in one flash the saying about the camel and the needle's eye. He believes in the poor brother Ivan who was the fool and the butt of the three and came in the end to inherit the kingdom. He gives us the finer insight which reveals the true meaning of "Blessed are the meek," which turns out to be no irony after all! He writes far more persuasively in "Seems So!" than he has ever written before. Literature has always belonged to the middle class. The memoirs of Peers and Paupers alike are generally faked. Somebody pays for them. But here we do seem honestly to hear the poor man's voice. Mr. Reynolds has given us something no less original than true.

Thomas Secombe.

TELLING THE WEATHER.

At the end of every year a number of hardy annuals, well able to stand various kinds of frost, make their appearance. Two of them, "Zadkiel's Almanac and Ephemeris" and "Old Moore's Almanack" perhaps may be taken as typical specimens, and both suggest some rather curious problems. Presumably the ordinary laws of supply and demand govern the production of such publications; they must be sold, or they would not continue to be offered for sale. Who, then, are the buyers, and for what reason are the almanacs bought? A glance at their contents shows a certain similarity of air. Zadkiel's contains a sort of se-

rial prophecy in astrology, which it names "Voices of the Stars"; Old Moore's motto or sub-title appears to be "Vox Stellarum." Both contain various tables of astronomical events, tides, hours of rising and setting of the sun, eclipses, phases of the moon, and so on, and both make predictions as to the course of international politics, with vague generalities suggesting battle, murder, and sudden death. "Old Moore" adds a list, with dates, of all the principal English and Irish fairs for 1912, but considerably warns his readers that as the dates are constantly being changed his publishers do not hold themselves responsible for any inaccuracy; and he also presents his readers with a series of portraits which,

¹ Seems So! By Stephen Reynolds and Bob and Tom Woolley. Extra crown 8vo. 5s. net.

according to Mr. Bernard Shaw, probably represent what the ordinary working man supposes to be the Government, which this year apparently consists of the King and Queen, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Lansdowne, and Sir Herbert Beer-bohm Tree. In addition—and this is perhaps the feature which is most generally popular—both almanacs contain forecasts of the weather. "Old Moore," to be sure, has not quite the same confidence in precise prediction which is displayed by his rival. He does not do much more than remark of the weather of January 1912 that it will be "bright and cold"; February will be "rough and stormy"; June will be "wet and cold"; August will be "very changeable, not to say disappointing," and so forth. We may note in passing the prediction that in August "there will be little doing upon the Stock Exchange." But Zadkiel is far more exact. He can go as far ahead as December 1912 even, and tell you the difference between the weather of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and so on, right through the month, so that we know already, for instance, about Christmas this year that on the 23rd the weather will be fair; "24th and 25th, unsettled; 26th, fair; 27th and 28th, breezy, variable; 29th to 31st, fair on the whole." The moderation of the qualifying "on the whole" makes it appeal at once. "Zadkiel"—or was it "Old Moore," or another?—in making this particular prediction, must have had in mind his experience with the shepherd of Salisbury Plain. Zadkiel, the story goes, went walking over Salisbury Plain on a glorious morning, and met a shepherd to whom he remarked that it was a fine day. The shepherd replied that no doubt that was the case at present, but that there would shortly be heavy rain. "Bosh!" Zadkiel is reported to have replied, and walked on. It very soon poured with rain and drenched

him to the skin, so he returned to the shepherd to find out, if he could, the marvellous secret of his weather lore. The shepherd, for five pounds down, at last consented to tell him, went into his cottage, and from behind a chest of drawers produced "Zadkiel's Almanac." "There!" he said, "I always goes by him, and I'm never wrong. 'Fine and warm,' he says, so I knowed what the weather would be, for it's always the opposite." Were human hopes ever more cruelly thrown down!

Perhaps the real reason for the demand for weather prophecies, whether they are likely to be correct or not, is just the very simple one that the majority of people are more interested in the weather than in any other subject whatever. We begin the day by wishing every one we meet a good morning, and we may reflect that we have probably done so in some form or other since the first spade turned its sod. The first point to ascertain, for many of us, on waking in the morning is the direction of the wind; probably we have heard whether it is raining or not before we come to the window. The daily attendance on a thermometer, a barometer, a rain-gauge, and possibly an instrument for recording sunshine is for a large number of persons an event of greater importance than their breakfast. When the newspapers arrive more people turn first to the weather forecast than to any other subject. It would be logical to suppose, for that reason, that there must be a large public for books dealing with the same topic. Weather books, at all events, like weather almanacs, continue to be issued one after another, and one after another hold out the hope that we shall learn more than we know already. Here is Dr. W. N. Shaw, for instance, in his book "Forecasting Weather" (Constable, 12s. 6d.) discussing the "moods" or "fits" which the weather seems to display for special

types of occurrence. A thunderstorm occurs one day in some part of the country; probably there will be thunderstorms in other parts the next day, even though there may be no meteorological conditions pointing specially to such a probability. After a dry period, again, "the weather sometimes seems unable to rain even under barometric conditions which are apparently most favorable for it," while rain may sometimes fall, without any recognizable reason, in the central region of an anticyclone, for instance. But Dr. Shaw is undismayed at these irregularities. He has been responsible for the forecasts of the weather issued by the Meteorological Office for the past eleven years, and his experience leads him to an engaging optimism. "Doubtless an explanation will be forthcoming in due course," he remarks, and we may leave it at that. He will, perhaps, also be able at some time in the future to discover some physical theory for the development of electricity in a thunderstorm. At present he knows of no explanation which can be applied to the different types of storms of which we have experience. How is it, he asks, that "when Nature is in the mood" every rain-shower is a thunderstorm, while on other occasions a prolonged period of hot weather may pass quietly away without a single peal of thunder? We may guess at the reason, but nobody knows it.

What we do seem to have learnt lately is something more about the behavior of frost. Here, apparently, progress takes place somewhat on the lines of medical science; we discover what is apparently a good reason one day and find a better reason the next. For instance, it is not so long ago that we were told that the cause of plants being damaged in spring frosts was not so much the freezing of the plant-cells as the rapid thawing of them in the sun's rays. Now, it seems there is a

new theory; in spring there is no sugar in the plant's tissues. A plant can weather a winter because during the cold it develops its starch into sugar, which resists frost, but when the warmer weather comes the sugar is reconverted into starch, which renders the plant defenceless. Ought we to keep our delicate plants colder than the spring temperatures, then, in order to save them? Another doctrine, which, though it is not equally subversive of the beliefs of yesterday, explains what to some gardeners may hitherto have seemed difficult of explanation, is Dr. Shaw's summing-up of what he describes as "well-established conclusions" as to the behavior of frost in situations differing as to height. When the sun goes down on an evening which will probably turn to frost, the earth and the grass and plants on it lose heat and become colder than the air; they consequently cover themselves with dew or hoar-frost. But in turn "they cool the air next to them, and the cooled air in its turn trickles like water downhill to the valleys." So that the plants on the tops of the hills become surrounded by a new stratum of air which is comparatively warm, while the cooled air goes on trickling away from them. This cooled air, finding its way downhill, collects in hollows on the hillside and in the valley at the bottom; the coldest air always gravitates lowest. Consequently the plants on the top of the hill escape damage, while those in the hollows and in the valley are frozen in icy pools of air. You get, then, the seemingly contradictory conclusion that plants in the "exposed" situation are likely to be undamaged by frosts which will kill plants that lie in the "shelter" of the valley. That is no doubt a fact which the countryman or gardener who has had personal experience of frost in hilly country well appreciates, even though he may not be equally ready

with the reason for it. Possibly he may be grateful for the following summing-up—it may almost be called a definition—of the causes which are most likely to produce that disturbing and unhappy event, a hard April frost. Here is the “tip” in the matured phraseology of the Meteorological Office:—

The Spectator.

If the barometer and wind are watched it will be noticed that after fair, with a falling barometer and a southerly or south-westerly wind, the wind veers to the west, north-west, or north, and becomes apparently drier, and the weather clears and becomes cold. If this change happens towards the evening, and the wind drops when the sky clears, a frosty night is almost certain.

AT THE SIGN OF THE PLOUGH.

PAPER XII.—ANSWERS. SHAKESPEARE: THE FALSTAFF CYCLE.
(KING HENRY IV., KING HENRY V., AND THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.)

By SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK, BART.

1. Find an appropriate motto for the settlement of a strike. *Answer:* A peace is of the nature of a conquest (2 *Henry IV.*, 4, II.).
2. What medical treatment was offered by whom to Falstaff? *Answer:* Imprisonment; by the Chief Justice (2 *Henry IV.*, 1, II.).
3. Who is the most deliberate liar in King Henry IV.? *Answer:* Rumor.
4. Compare the range of Elizabethan archery and artillery. *Answers:* Archery 14½ score yards; artillery twelve score (*Merry Wives*, 3, II.; 2 *Henry IV.*, 3, II.).
5. Give an account of (a) Justice Shallow's dimensions, and (b) his relations with the royal family. *Answers:* (a) To any thick sight were invisible. (b) As if sworn brother to John of Gaunt (2 *Henry IV.*, 3, II.).
6. State the facts and consequences of Bardolph's earliest and latest thefts. *Answer:* A cup of sack—taken with the manner: a pax—the gallows (1 *Henry IV.*, 2, IV.; *Henry V.*, 3, VI.).
7. How did Falstaff justify larceny? *Answer:* 'Tis no sin for a man to labor in his vocation (1 *Henry IV.*, 1, II.).
8. Give two words as showing Shakespeare's orthodoxy on French prosody. *Answer:* Esperance, pense (1 *Henry IV.*, 5, II.; *Merry Wives*, 5, V.).
9. (a) What was Falstaff's hope of salvation, and (b) for what did he refuse to risk his soul? (c) Give its true value. *Answers:* (a) Lest the oil that's in me should set hell on fire; (b) For never a king's son in Christendom; (c) A cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg. ([a] *Merry Wives*, 5, V.; [b, c] 1 *Henry IV.*, 1, II.).
10. Were they real Germans? *Answer:* Seemingly not: Germans are honest men (*Merry Wives*, 4, V.).
11. (a) Where and by whom was the art of swearing least understood? (b) Explain what the Devil swears on. *Answers:* (a) A comfit-maker's wife in Finsbury; (b) the cross of a Welsh hook (1 *Henry IV.*, 3, I.; 1 *Henry IV.*, 2, IV.).
12. (a) What did Falstaff think of swearing by, and (b) how was the offer received? *Answers:* (a) I would swear by thy [Bardolph's] face; (b) I would my face were in your belly (1 *Henry IV.*, 3, III.).

The Cornhill Magazine.

THE SHADOW ON PEKING.

The chief railway station in Peking must be one of the most fascinating of all the curious places in the world. Its red façade rises within a stone's throw of the gray mass and painted armaments of the principal gate of the city. A few yards away bare-headed men squat in the dust of ages, selling nuts or fruit or mysterious ornaments, just as things have been sold there for centuries. The ears of the new-comer are not freed from the rattle of luggage trolleys before they receive the sound of carts of mediæval design rumbling over mediæval stones.

During several days of the past autumn this station has formed the stage of scenes of that rare kind in which the hastened march of history may be said to become momentarily visible. The stir of revolution manifested itself here as nowhere else in the capital. Here bands of fugitives assembled in those days, including victims from almost every class of citizen. Many thousands fled by South-bound trains within the space of several days—and many hundreds of these, probably, had hoped never to mount the "fire-carts" of the West. Among the strange and moving visions which haunt termini this spectacle of weird irony is unique.

The third-class carriages head the train. A long while before the moment of departure they are crowded so that another human being could by no safe means be squeezed in. Children are heaped one above another till positively there is room for no more children. Men, climbing up between the carriages, cling to any hook or bar or other projection that offers. The vans overflow with packages of goods precious or endeared by some unimaginable charm, of familiarity; there are chattels of the most astonishing variety, exquisite treasures of porcelain

and scented wood, too hastily wrapped up, and huge shabby wicker chairs, worth very little money, but prized no doubt in virtue of the European style, which is fashionable. A striking thing is the stillness that reigns, not a ceremonial or sullen silence, but the vague indifferent calm of flocks and herds when they are dumb at their going in or coming out. Even the children are silent. The eyes of old men look fixedly, and with no apparent emotion to the front. Here and there the head of a young girl leans from a window, the yellow star of a silk flower fixed in her sleek black hair. The expression on all faces is as utterly detached as ever. Yet few of these people hope to see their homes again. Further down the train are first-class carriages. The merchants and gentry sit huddled in their furs, some motionless, some apathetically gazing at newspapers. There are curious little faces of Manchu grandees, thin and pallid, with dry wrinkled skin, and small callous eyes staring through thick-rimmed spectacles. They recall the crabbed faces of Dutch worthies of the stay-at-home and counting-house type, as etched by Old Masters. All these people, too, have an air of complete indifference to the present and all things to come. But surely some among them are sensible of the ironies of their situation? The journals they have bought to wile away this very painful quarter-of-an-hour have for years been preparing the way for the present crisis. The very instruments of flight, the cars stamped with labels in a foreign tongue, must be a galling reminder of the steel-thrust of the West lying right at the heart of Peking. The metals run parallel to the city wall; between the platform and the base of the rampart there are only a few shivering trees

and crimson flowers of autumn; there is a little pale sunlight on the battlements.

Within the city, in the long dusty streets and open spaces, little suggests the confusion and terror of a crisis. To the habitués the more frequented quarters may seem somewhat hushed and sparsely peopled; the stream of traffic runs somewhat thin, and the broughams which are the pride of the well-to-do are absent. Little groups of soldiers stand about at gateways and cross-roads, though the display of authority is far from overwhelming. The air is entirely free from the sinister gloom which broods over Western capitals at similar times of eruption. In the Legation quarter there are no symptoms to be noted—except one, which is as quaint as it is significant. Many families of the wealthier native classes have sought refuge in the great European hotel, in front of which their carriages and blue Peking carts throng the way. And there they may be seen at the upper windows, small figures of Manchu ladies and children peeping between the lace curtains, patches of mulberry color and Mediterranean blue.

The recesses of Peking are still among the impenetrable places of the earth. Some years ago Pierre Loti's marvellous description of the inner city was given to the world in a book entitled "*Les Derniers Jours de Pékin*." It is there written that the mysteries of the Forbidden City vanished at the forcing of its gates, that foreign occupation destroyed the spell for ever. The red gates are now again fast barred, and it might seem that a sanctity dwells inside those geranium-hued walls that a material violation cannot dispel. There would appear to exist some spiritual virtue clinging to the arcana within, elusive and inviolable.

The Saturday Review.

Walking beneath the walls in the quiet light of a November afternoon one can imagine that this belief of the inhabitants, if this is the belief they hold, is justified by their faith. Their imperturbable sangfroid, which is invaluable at the present time, may well be chiefly inspired by such a faith. The wondrous tranquillity of all that meets the eye is altogether in harmony with this impression. The imperial tiles shine freshly among the deepening colors of the sky. Grasses and little plants stand up from copings, as from English manor walls. Some white birds spread their milky flight across a yellow roof. In all China there is no sener spot than the approach to the Forbidden City, that little group of palaces on which all menaces are centred. The decline of the Manchu autocracy resembles the fading of a great flower whose petal-tips crinkle and perish while the centre remains fresh and bright. The seat of the Government is surrounded by an almost Arcadian calm, while outposts of its far-stretched greatness fall in sudden and complete ruin. It is said that through the worst alarms the Son of Heaven, in his dim and gilded seclusion, continued daily to study the reading and writing of the Chinese character. Those in positions of highest responsibility and greatest danger gave no sign of even considering the expediency of flight. The inner courts of the Forbidden City may be sheltering distracted counsels and nights of poignant suspense. All appearances show as quiet and bland a face as the yellow roofs, yellow like yellow broom, rising impassively against the blue. The sentries at ease, the lifeless water of the moat, the weeds sprouting from the walls, give an impression of calm as cold and listless as the evening frost.

H. Prideaux Brune.

M. BERGSON ON COMEDY.*

If the occasion of laughter were the same in every man, the task of the philosopher who set out, as M. Bergson does, to discover "the basal element in the laughable" would be simpler. But in the matter of the laughable, how evident it is that one man's meat is another's poison; who has not at one time or another known an evening's pleasure at the play to be poisoned by the laughter insistently misplaced (as it seemed to him) of some person or persons adjacent who, on their part, gave every sign of thriving mightily upon their own interpretation of the performance? One has seen the principal actress in Synge's semi-tragic masterpiece, *The Playboy of the Western World*, incommoded up to the fall of the final curtain, save when she has quelled the laughter by sheer magic of personality. One has known Hamlet's third-act neurasthenia to be regarded as the hugest of jokes, and the murder through the arras to go with a roar. On a quite recent occasion of the performance of *Pelléas et Mélisande* a section of the pit found it funny; but this was more readily excusable since, in addition to having a sneaking sympathy at certain moments of the action, one was aware that this part of the theatre was largely filled with persons who had paid their money in the expectation of a popular melodrama, for which at the last moment Maeterlinck's tragedy had been substituted. These instances, taken at haphazard, do but border, it may be said, on the subject of laughter: for this very reason they may serve to indicate its complex nature, and the questions they raise with regard to the motivation of laughter are in reality sufficiently profound. Why should some in the audience so over-stretch their legitimate

laughter as to obscure the finer effects of tragedy in the play, to the annoyance of others in the audience? How is it that a first-rate actor should come to be thought comic when he plays Hamlet? What reason can be given that hardened playgoers who came to weep with Mr. Martin Harvey should remain to laugh at Mr. Martin Harvey? It will serve to indicate the limitations of M. Bergson's basal examination if we assert at the outset that his book provides a satisfactory answer to none of these haphazard but relevant questions.

Before proceeding to a statement of M. Bergson's theory of the Comic, let us take some occasion of laughter that is free from the evident complication, psychological and social, of those given above. Clearly what is wanted is some scene or situation at which we have all, and all equally, laughed. One cannot think of a better type-instance than that of the pragmatist Square holding forth at the dinner-table that "Pain is the most contemptible thing in the world"; and at that precise point, says Fielding, "he unfortunately bit his tongue." Everyone in reading *Tom Jones* must have laughed at that. What is there in the discomfiture of Square that is irresistibly and typically comic? M. Bergson's answer should be provided in the following passage:—

The comic is that side of a person which reveals his likeness to a thing, that aspect of human events which, through its peculiar inelasticity, conveys the impression of pure mechanism, of automatism, of movement without life. Consequently it expresses an individual or collective imperfection which calls for an immediate corrective. This corrective is laughter, a social gesture that singles out and represses a special kind of absent-mindedness in men and in events.

This passage is perhaps M. Bergson's

* "Laughter." By Henri Bergson. London: Macmillan. 8s. 6d. net.

most inclusive definition of the comic. He gives many other definitions, but this will serve very fairly to summarize them. Basal elements in the laughable are "mechanical elasticity," "fundamental absentmindedness," the "distinct impression of a mechanical arrangement"; M. Bergson is never tired of repeating these things, and the starting-point to which he ever and again returns is represented by the words "something mechanical encrusted upon the living." Now let us consider the mechanical something encrusted upon poor Square which brings down our laughter upon him. Certainly it was inelastic in him to bite his own tongue. The mistake may have been due to absentmindedness; he would have fared better, no doubt, had he removed his thoughts from philosophy and bent them all upon his plate. We may agree that to bite the tongue during a didactic address at the dinner-table is undoubtedly an individual imperfection calling for an immediate corrective. It is, in M. Bergson's phraseology (or, to be more exact, in that of the English translation he has approved), to indicate "a special lack of adaptability to society." But is that not to put a rather portentous point upon a misfortune incident to all? If any one of us behaved after biting his tongue in sharp contrast to the way in which he had behaved before, would not that also be laughable? Would it not be all the more laughable by virtue of our realization that to bite the tongue on occasion and appear ridiculous is the common lot? But no. M. Bergson will not have anything to do with such words as "contrast" or "surprise"; the cause of laughter lies deep in the "automatism" of poor Square; there is something mechanical encrusted upon him whether or no he may never in all his life have bitten his tongue before, some trait inimical to society which society must forthwith

humiliate. Had M. Bergson taken any of his instances of the comic from Fielding or from Shakespeare, instead of almost exclusively from *Don Quixote* and the plays of Molière and Labiche, he would, one thinks, have had greater difficulty in pushing through his thesis in total disregard of such a fundamental distinction as that between laughter "with" and laughter "at." For this is what he has done.

It is when we come to a consideration of the comic in the theatre that we really tremble for the influence of M. Bergson. After all, another book may be written by another philosopher about the laughter in which we do not "always find an unavowed intention to humiliate." There is already a wise and brilliant essay in Meredith's name directing attention to Shakespeare's "laugh of heart and mind." But as regards M. Bergson's series of specifics for the writing of comedy, one is much afraid the fat is already in the fire. It is here that his insistence upon the "mechanical"—with the Jack-in-the-box, the Dancing-jack, and the Snowball as the only archetypes of what he calls "high-class comedy"—becomes most dangerous, because most readily acceptable. Indeed the mechanical is already accepted. The one comic effect in Shakespeare's splendidly unrigid comedies which we feel would be thoroughly congenial to M. Bergson is the conventional exit of Launcelot Gobbo, bowing to one and stepping back upon another of the friends of Bassanio, you will remember, in a manner supremely mechanical, but entirely without warrant in the text—in fact, an "encrustation upon the living" play, for which unimaginative managers are responsible. If we may take a moment to glance at the influence of M. Bergson upon the writing of modern comedy, as well as upon the manner of presenting the old, let us consider the following passage:—

And laughter will be more pronounced still if we find on the stage not merely two characters, as in the example from Pascal, but several—nay, as great a number as possible—the image of one another, who come and go, dance and gesticulate together, simultaneously striking the same attitude and tossing their arms about in the same manner.

As great a number as possible! This is the very heresy of contemporary farce, which goes upon the mechanical assumption that six unhappily married couples are six times as amusing as one, and that if one baby is funny triplets must needs be a scream.

Having merely remarked on the contradiction which one finds implicit in this book between the "mechanical" as at one and the same time the object-matter to be aimed at by comedy and the spirit in which the blow may most forcibly be aimed, one must venture a suggestion as to why the latest of M.

Bergson's works is unsatisfying. M. Bergson has chosen to illustrate his thesis in large part—indeed mainly—by reference to the theatre, and he does not move with his accustomed mastery in the theatre. His book, apart from its dangerous attempt to confine the spirit of comedy within the scheme of a philosophy, is remarkable principally for its omissions. Nothing is said concerning hysterical laughter or laughter which is perverse or stupid merely—the laughter at Hamlet. No allowance is made for the graduation of taste in its qualifying effect upon laughter; the people who found nothing but the laughable in Maeterlinck's tragedy must, ipso facto, have been visiting upon the play a righteous humiliation for its special lack of adaptability to society. Synge's art, a mingled yarn of laughter and tears together, must altogether evade the definitions of the professor.

The Outlook.

REST AFTER TOIL.

(A Welcome to 1912, being Leap Year.)

Our labor hath its ending,

The lute at last is dumb;

On trouser-knees past mending

No more you'll catch me bending;

Ladies, your turn has come.

Beneath what open casements

Have I not sung my suits;

With what profound abasements,

What tactful self-effacements

Avoided parents' boots!

To hearts how prone to harden

For three long years I've put

What pleas for grace or pardon

In many a twilit garden,

How dampish underfoot!

Ay, more, when out to dinner

How oft I've murmured "Stoop,

Sweet angel, to this sinner,"

And tried all arts to win her

Before we'd touched the soup

Rest After Toil.

And when I found no favor,
 Of one fond hope bereft,
 Turned to the fair enslaver
 (In case *her* heart might waver)
 Who simpered on my left,

And said, "Shall *we* get married?"
 And when she answered "Pish!"
 Beheld my future arid,
 My day-dreams twice miscarried,
 Not halfway through the fish.

On country walks, at dances,
 Well have I waged the strife;
 Hang it! with all these chances
 Anyone's fond advances
 Ought to have bagged a wife.

But no! without compunction
 (Or stay, there was that touch
 Of pity's mellowing unction
 From Maud, at Blisworth Junction)
 You've all replied, "Not much."

And now the tourney's closing
 Has left me limp and done;
 'Tis time for dreams and dozing,
 Three years of hard proposing
 Do take it out of one.

But if my field of vision
 Has overlooked some few
 Who might without derision
 Have watched the dart's incision
 Where Love had pinked me through—

Some maids or fair or clever
 Who did not mean to flout
 My amorous endeavor,
 (But by some fluke I never
 Happened to find them out)—

Behold, Convention's fetters
 Have vanished like a ghost;
 Ye must be Love's abettors,
 Girls, and I'd like your letters,
 Please, by an early post.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

To their illustrated series devoted to the Art Galleries of America, L. C. Page & Co. add a volume descriptive of The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Other Collections of Philadelphia. In appearance, the book is uniform with the earlier volumes in the series,—the first descriptive of The Art of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, and the second devoted to the collections in The Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The author of the present volume is Helen W. Henderson, who has made a thorough and loving study of the art treasures contained not only in the collections of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, but in the other collections of Philadelphia,—the Pennsylvania Museum, the Wiltstach Collection and the collections of Independence Hall and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The volume is something more than a handbook. It is full of personal and historical details and discriminating appreciation and criticism. Sixty or seventy full-page illustrations reproduce some of the most striking and important works in the various collections.

The final tragic drama of "The Ring," "Götterdämmerung," has been translated by Oliver Huckle and beautifully printed and embellished by the Thomas Y. Crowell Company. The plot relates, as is well known, the story of Guttrune and the Dwarf against Siegfried, the death of that hero and the suicide of Brunhilda on his pyre. Mr. Huckle has used a clear, flowing, un-rhymed verse, varying his metre according to the necessities of the poem, and omitting entirely that over-ornateness in phraseology of which Wagner was so constantly guilty. The poem gains greatly by this simple stateliness and the author closes the cycle of

dramas, for whose presentation in English he has done so much, most worthily. Without the help of dazzling stage pictures the poems seem more aloof from ordinary life than usual; the magic potions, and death-bearing rings, and dragons, and Valhalla burning up in the sky, are incredibly remote.

Another translation, fully as well done into English and distinctly more believable, is the "Three Lays of Marie de France" made-over into modern verse by Frederick Bliss Luquiens. Marie was an educated lady of the French Court in the latter part of the twelfth century and a very popular writer of her day. Her poetry was, according to the custom of her age, narrative. The stories rendered are "Sir Launfal"—a distinctly different Sir Launfal from Lowell's—"The Maiden of the Ash," "The Lovers Twain," and all bear a close relationship to the Arthurian Legends. This fact has influenced the translator so that the resemblance to Tennyson's "Idyls" is salient, and, while the lines do not sing with Tennyson's exquisite music, the form, the whole conception of transcription from one age and language to another, is identical. The effect, moreover, is charming. Henry Holt & Company.

An unusual personal and pathetic interest attaches to the slender volume of verse, "Hard Labor and Other Poems" by John Carter, which is published by the Baker & Taylor Co. John Carter is a name which conceals the identity of a man who passed five years or more in a Minnesota penitentiary, for breaking into and robbing a railroad station. The crime was committed when he was but nineteen, a homeless tramp stealing a ride upon a freight train, from which he was thrown by the crew one cold Novem-

ber night. He stole but \$24.00, but the crime carried with it a ten years' sentence, which was shortened by executive clemency when attention was attracted to his case by the unusual quality of the verse which he sent out from his cell to the paper published in the penitentiary and later to the magazines. The poems in this book would command attention, aside from the tragedy of the conditions under which they were written, but a knowledge of those conditions gives them peculiar poignancy as the expression of moods attending prison life and the deliverance from it. These lines from the "Ballade of Misery and Iron" illustrate the remarkable quality of the book:

Haggard faces and trembling knees,
Eyes that shine with a weakling's
hate,

Lips that murmur their blasphemies,
Murderers' hearts that darkly wait:
These are they who were men of
late,

Fit to hold a plough or a sword.

If a prayer this wall may penetrate,
Have pity on these my comrades, Lord!
Poets sing of life at the lees

In tender verses and delicate;
Of tears and manifold agonies—

Little they know of what they prate.
Out of this silence, passionate
Sounds a deeper, a wilder chord.

If a song be heard through the narrow grate,
Have pity on these my comrades, Lord!

The new "Life and Times of Cavour" by William Roscoe Thayer will immediately take rank as an authority. The author, already well known as a writer on Italian subjects, has displayed in these volumes with distinction a grasp of historical movements, the results of an enormous amount of research and a facility in putting briefly the essential quality of a person or a situation. The biography begins with an account of the youth of Ca-

vour and his preparation for a public career. He early recognized that this was his bent, but for many years because of his liberal opinions he was kept in private life. During this time, however, he served a good apprenticeship for the statesmanship to which he was to devote his life. He travelled in France and England, administered the large estates of his family, edited the *Risorgimento* and finally, after the second constitutional election in Piedmont, took his seat in Parliament. The story of his life now becomes the story of European diplomacy. How Cavour developed Piedmont and guided Victor Emmanuel, watched every move on the part of the Powers and used every opening for the credit of his country is told with clearness and skill. The situation in 1859 when he played Louis Napoleon, England and Austria until he forced Austria to declare war is described and explained so vividly that the reader feels all the joy of the contest. Cavour walked a careful path after the return of Napoleon to France; the book shows in detail how he handled the complications in connection with Garibaldi, and Mazzini and affairs after the expedition of the Thousand. Not the least of his triumphs was the result of his long and difficult diplomatic relations with England in the sympathy of that country with the establishment of Victor Emmanuel on the throne of United Italy. The book reveals Garibaldi in all his strength and weakness,—his charm as well as his childishness and vanity. As a whole, the biography is more a record of the action of Cavour's mind than a personal biography, but one gets, besides much knowledge of the times, a real impression of "the little spectacled man" whose statesmanship puts him in the class with Bismarck and Lincoln. Houghton Mifflin Co.